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THE AGRARIAN QUESTION IN ASIA ● PEASANTRY IN BANGLADESH ● IDENTIFYING THE PEASANT CLASSES - IN - THEMSELVES IN RURAL INDIA

EDITORIAL NOTE

INCULCATING a particular perception of history is often the first and the most insidious step towards enforcing ideological conformism in contemporary bourgeois societies. Thus, school children in conservative Britain are taught to regard 1688 as the "Glorious Revolution", and are taught to sympathise, through comics, and story books, not to mention text books on history, with the "dashing young cavaliers", as opposed to the "boorish and cruel Roundheads". And where the revolutionary tradition is not actually distorted, it is altogether suppressed. It is important for Marxist historiography, therefore, not only to fight against ideological distortions of history, but also to undertake the task of recovering the revolutionary tradition of struggle which is systematically submerged in conservative historiography. *Social Scientist* accordingly has always kept its pages open for the publication of research work in history, that, however obliquely, aids in the furtherance of this project.

The current number of *Social Scientist* too is devoted largely to themes in the realm of historical research. Communal historiography in our country, which looks at Indian history in terms of the ascendancy of particular religious communities, usually portrays the medieval Indian state as if it constituted an Islamic theocracy committed entirely to the propagation of Islam and the establishment of *Shariat*. Iqtadar Alam Khan's article attacks this view and brings out the "secular" features of the medieval Indian state, not of course in the sense of entailing a separation of religion from politics, but in the sense of the state often playing the role of an arbiter between different religious groups, a phenomenon which anticipates, to an extent, the specific contours of modern Indian "secularism"; the ideological buttress for this "secularism" was provided by the development of a concept of sovereignty which enjoined upon the king the task of establishing "universal reconciliation" within his realm. Such a theory and practice of state craft, according to the author, was necessitated by the culturally fragmented nature of the ruling class, which incorporated both Muslim nobles as well as Hindu chieftains. Clashes within the ruling class, especially between the Hindu chiefs and the Muslim kings, which erupted with particular intensity in periods of contracting revenues, were often seen by contemporary, theologically-oriented

chroniclers, as constituting episodes in a holy war; but to see medieval Indian history through their eyes is to miss its essential characteristics and dynamics.

The pieces by Sanat Bose and A. Satyanarayana recapture the history of struggle of the toiling masses in two different regions of the country at two different times. Bose draws attention to a significant though little-known document, *Report of the Committee on Industrial Unrest in Bengal*, 1921 which gives valuable information on the wave of strike-struggles that swept over Bengal in 1920-21 in the aftermath of the first World War. Within a short span of nine months, 137 strikes broke out in Bengal, covering virtually all the existing industries in the province; the working class, for the first time in this region, was coming into its own. A fascinating glimpse into the nature, causes, and the course of development of these strikes is provided in this document, which deserves wider notice among scholars in this area. Satyanarayana focusses on the growth of the left movement, especially the communist movement, in Andhra in the thirties. Within a very short span of time, the communists who were a negligible force in 1934, could claim substantial influence among the working class, the peasantry and the youth, by virtue of their tireless work, within a united front strategy, in organising and leading the struggles of the toilers against the background of the vicissitudes that world capitalism was passing through.

Finally, the short piece by Princy Dharmaratne expose the utter absurdity, from the point of view of third world economies, of the set of economic policies prescribed by agencies like the IMF. At a time when the world capitalist crisis has saddled these economies with acute balance of payments difficulties, when the need is for a restriction on their imports or a greater acceptance of their exports, the IMF pushes them into larger borrowing, which only further compounds their payments difficulties. As the loan terms stiffen, the loans pile up even faster; the net result is a snuffing out of whatever development had been taking place, and an escalation of the burdens on the people who are pressed deeper into the mire of hunger, poverty and unemployment.

*IQTIDAR ALAM KHAN**

Medieval Indian Notions of Secular Statecraft in Retrospect

THE LIBERAL ideas that permeate the Indian Constitution as also those exercising a large measure of influence on the general working of the modern Indian polity, in reality do not seek to establish a truly secular state, namely, a state that should preclude religion altogether from playing a role in the exercise of political authority. The emphasis is not on the separation of state from religion but on its role as an arbiter between religions. But, at the same time, the state is also perceived as an instrument for introducing reforms in the Hindu social and religious customs. It is expected to play a similar but less conspicuous role in respect of the Islamic institutions.[1] One may thus characterise the modern Indian state as a supra-religious organisation vested with the authority to establish, control and regulate the religious establishments. While not identifying itself with one particular religion, this state does aspire to bring the major religions of the country, and through them the socio-cultural outlook of the people following them, in harmony with social norms facilitating the ongoing processes of modernisation and capitalist expansion. From this it follows that the concept of secularism embedded in the governing principles of the Indian Constitution is peculiar to the Indian situation where a bourgeois landlord combine is called upon to control and carry forward an under-developed and culturally fragmented society on the path of capitalist development.

As to what are the historical antecedents of this particular type of secularism is a much debated question which has been sought to be answered by the social scientists variously in keeping with their respective perceptions of the forces and the influences that contributed to the shaping of modern Indian polity. It is no doubt true that many of the features of Indian secularism were actually defined, in the course of the freedom struggle.[2] These were largely the outcome of compromises and adjustments arrived at between different cultural and interest groups within the eclectic framework of Gandhian political theory. A further suggestion that the attitude of religious tolerance underlining Indian secularism may be traced back to ancient religious tradition of India also deserves consideration.[3] But it seems that another and, perhaps, more pertinent angle from which an answer to this question may be sought is that of tracing the elements of continuity in the features of the Indian state from before the colonial period. An

enquiry on these lines may be helpful in ascertaining as to what extent the secular features of the modern Indian state are rooted in the historical experience of the pre-modern period. As has been argued by the present author in an earlier paper, a closer examination of the working of the medieval Indian states brings out that Indian secularism, with all its special features, seems to be an extension of a particular tradition of political organisation, that was evolving in India down to the end of the 18th century.[1] In this paper, I am going to elaborate on the same argument with reference to evidence that has been further enlarged in the meanwhile.

In this context it would be relevant to restate in general terms certain elementary propositions regarding the medieval Indian states dominated by different ethnic groups professing Islam. These states wee invariably established and maintained on the basis of a working arrangement, arrived at, after the initial acts of wars and conquests, between the two clearly identifiable ruling groups: the predominantly Muslim officers of the king and the hereditary local chiefs who were mainly Hindus. Both these groups flourished on the appropriation of available social surplus and also participated, though from different hierarchical planes, in the exercise of political authority. It would, therefore, be reasonable to treat the king's officers and the hereditary chiefs as two segments of one and the same ruling class. It was the primary interest of this larger ruling class that the medieval Indian states were oriented to serve. In these states, the lion's share of the appropriated surplus was of course cornered by the king and his high officers which made it inevitable that the hereditary chiefs should often feel disgruntled and sometimes even come into a clash with the king and his officers over the sharing of the revenues. The Persian chroniclers, whose perception of the contemporary political process was in most cases coloured by their theological education, falsely characterised these clashes as a part of the holy war that, according to their understanding, a Muslim ruler was expected to conduct continuously. Intra ruling class clashes of this type naturally tended to become fierce and prolonged in a situation of contracting revenues. While, on the other hand, in a state having at its disposal fast extending resources, the tensions within the ruling class tended to recede and the Hindu chiefs showed greater eagerness to identify themselves with the states dominated by the Muslim kings and their officers. Sometimes, periods of comparative harmony within the ruling class were accompanied by corresponding shifts in the principles governing the working of the state towards greater tolerance and accommodation of the non-Muslim groups.

A state representing the above situation of the ruling class would not have survived for long if it were organised as a Islamic theocracy committed entirely to establishing *shariat* and propagation of Islam. That the Delhi Sultanate as well as the Mughal empire were far from being Islamic theocracies and actually carried within their state orgainsations many overtly secular features is fully borne out by the observations of Ziyauddin Barani and Abul Fazl on the problems of sovereignty. It also seems that some of the essential elements of the theories of state as enunciated by them were, apparently

borrowed from the political theorists of Ancient India in preference to what has been postulated by the early Islamic authorities. This is again an indication of the extent and nature of the transformation that was taking place imperceptibly in the essential character of the medieval Indian states, bringing them in tune with the realities of the situation of a composite ruling class. In the ensuing paragraphs, we begin our investigation of the secular features of these states by exploring the writing of Barani and Abul Fazl for establishing the above two points.

The *Fatawa-i Jahandari* of Barani enables one to understand the real character of the Delhi Sultanate. "It was", writes Muhammad Habib, "not a theocratic state in any sense of the word. Its basis was not *shariat* of Islam but the *zawabit* or State laws made by the king". Barani defines *zabita* as "a rule of action which a king imposes as an obligatory duty on himself for realising the welfare of the state and from which he never deviates." It is obvious that these *zawabit* would often tend to favour the royalty and the officers of the king. Barani also expresses a pious wish that the *zawabit* framed by the *sultan* should not be violative of the provisions of *shariat*. But at the same time he makes it very explicit that the *zawabit* were not based on any religious text or texts or their interpretation by the *'Ulama*. These were legislated by the king solely on the basis of his understanding of what was good for his kingdom. As Muhammed Habib puts it, 'Barani leaves us in no doubt that in case of a conflict the state laws (i.e., *zawabit*) overrode the *shariat*". In practice many of the *zawabit* framed by Muslim rulers in India tended to dilute the impact of Islamic *shariat* on the state. The *zabita* prohibiting cow slaughter framed by Zainul Abidin of Kashmir during the 15th century[6] and enforced all over the Mughal empire not only during the reign of Akbar[7] but in those of Jahangir and Shahjahan as well[8] can be cited as an interesting example of this type of *zawabit*. It is worth noting that in the Mughal empire, prohibition of cow slaughter as well as killing of other animals considered sacred was not meant simply as a gesture of good-will towards the Hindu subjects but these *zawabit* also carried stringent punitive provisions. There are cases on record of Muslims accused of cow slaughter or of having killed a peacock being taken to task by the state authorities, which clearly amounted to going against the spirit of *shariat*.[9]

Defining the functions of the state, Barani postulates, "One of the chief factors of stability in the affairs of the government is that every one confines himself to his own proper work as owing to this the administrative arrangements of the country improve".

According to him, "when persons belonging to one profession take to another from profit motive, the affairs of the (state) do not remain stable." At one place in the *Fatawa-i Jahandari*, he suggests three fold division of the society in keeping with the professions of the people, namely those of intellectuals, warriors and artisans. At another place, he mentions six professional categories: soldiers, agriculturists, speculators, shopkeepers, merchants and officers of the king. While referring to these

good of the society.[10] Barani's above categorisation of the professional groups to be kept separated from each other is in addition to his two broader divisions of men on the basis of their births; *afazil* and *arazil*. This last division of men on the basis of birth and ancestry is not something novel to the Islamic tradition of post-koranic period. It has in fact come to be accepted as the central point of reference in the writings of the Muslim theorists who have generalised with reference to working of the post Abbasid state dominated by the Turkish elements.[11] But the notion of the society being divided into three or more professional groups and the state being responsible for maintaining a balance between them by not allowing inter-professional mobility is a point on which Barani's theory of state deviates from the postulates of the early Muslim theorists. In this respect he appears to be repeating the well known prescription of the ancient Indian writers like Kautilya and Narada that it was the duty of the ruler to prevent individuals from transgressing the rules of the *varna* or *jati* to which they belonged.[12]

A closer examination of Abul Fazl's observations on the problem of sovereignty indicates, that the process of secularisation of the Indian state, continuing since the inception of the Delhi Sultanate, had become still more pronounced during the 16th century. He gives a new definiton of sovereignty which precludes entirely the identification of the state with one particular religion. Royalty is defined by Abul Fazl under *ain-i manzil abadi* (loosely translated by Blochmann as "The House-hold") as "a light emanating from God, the *farr-i izidi*, which is communicated by God to the kings without the qualities flowing from the possession of *farr-i izidi* was that the king would always be above "sectarian differences". His beneficence and protection would be equally extended to all his subjects without making distinction on the basis of religion or any other denomination.[13] Within the scope for the operation of those provisions which seek to impose certain specific types of disabilities on the *zimmis*. Nor does this allow the state to become the instrument for the propagation of one particular religion. But, on the other hand. the theory of soveriegnty recorded by Abul Fazl makes it obligatory for the king to establish universal reconciliation (*sulh-i kul*) within his realm. While listing the causes of 'misunderstandings" and "contentions" discernible in Indian society in an illuminating passage in the third volume of the *Ain-i Akbari*, under the title *ahwal-i-Hindustan,* Abul Fazl hints that it was mainly owing to the apathy of the princes that the negative factors like religious persecution, an attitude of blindly following the established laws (*wazaridan-i-tund bad-i taqlid wa afsurdan-i chiragh-i khirad*") and inability of the people to understand each other's paths/religions on account of linguistic barriers (*begangi-i zubanha w nadanistan-i basich-ha-i yek diger*), which contribute to social strife, could not be remedied, [11] From this passage it follows unminstakeably that according to Abul Fazl, a king interested in establishing *sulh-i kul* in Hindustan was called upon, first and foremost, to remove the causes of social strife listed by him. And in this context an important task that he assigned to the king was that of enabling the people to appreciate the true spirit of different religions by making it possible for the elite to read and understand all

While reading this passage, one is reminded of Akbar's attempt to have all the major Brahmanical texts translated into Persian. That translation programme was apparently taken up as a step in the direction of this idyllic remedy for removing religious hatred.

It is worth noting that the theory depicting soverignty as *farr-i-izadi* could be formally registered only towards the end of the sixteenth century when as a result of Akbar's Rajput policy, the composition of the body of the king's officers had already been altered in a significant manner. By this time, the Rajput chiefs had come to represent about 22.5 per cent of the high *mansabdars* and their strength was continuously growing.[15] It is obvious that the rise of this theory, with all its features, reflected through Abul Fazl's observations at different places in the *Ain-i Akbari*, was in some way linked with the above transformation in the composition of the high officers of the state. Apoparently, it revealed the changing cultural ethos of the ruling class within which the weight of the Rajput chiefs in terms of their share in the total appropriated surplus as well as in the exercise of political authority was growing steadily.

But let us also keep in mind the fact that the theory of *farr-i izadi* was not Abul Fazl's original contribution. In reality, this new and patently un-Islamic conception of sovereignty was present in the Mughal polity even before Akbar's coming to the throne. Humayun is reported to have adopted elaborate rituals marking the ceremony of his appearance in public. This ceremony, according to Rafiuddin Ibrahim Shirazi, was known as *jalwa-i quds* ('the manifestation of divinity'). The attempt apparently was to provide the king with a divine halo. For establishing this practice he was in fact accused by men of orthodox persuasions of trying to assume a divine status.[16] It was perhaps on account of a similar suspicion that in one of Shah Tahmasp's letters to Sultan Salim of Turkey, Humayun was criticised for allegedly abrogating *shariat*.[17] *This in turn should suggest that the new cultural ethos of the ruling class underlining the concept of farr-i izadi* had already started surfacing by the time Humayun came to the throne and its was perhaps an outcome of the entry of an appreciable number of Hindu chiefs in the service of the Delhi Sultanate during the preceding two centuries.

It is again with reference to the changing cultural ethos of the ruling class and the accompanying process of the growing importance of the Rajput chiefs within it that one can hope to adequately explain the contradictory phenomenon of the general working of the state in its several vital aspects, by and large conforming to the principles of *sulh-i kul* even during the periods when the reigning monarchs were pursuing manifestly intolerant religious policies. To support this contention one may cite instances like the continuation of a general ban on cow slaughter during the early years of Shahjahan's reign[18] or the *jaziya* remaining in abeyance under Aurangzeb down to 1679 or the sudden influx of many more non-Muslims in the military service of the Mughal state during the second half of Aurangzeb's[20] reign when otherwise he is known to have adopted a very [illegible]

recorded by Abul Fazl had come to stay in the Mughal polity is also proved by a number of Aurangzeb's statements that occur in his correspondence preserved in *Ahkam-i Alamgiri*. Notwithstanding his anxiety to restore the primacy of *shariat* in the affairs of the Mughal state, Aurangzeb writes to one of his officers : "What have wordly affairs to do with religion. And why should bigotry intrude into matters of religion? 'For you there is your religion, and for me mine (*lakum dinkum wa lidin*)'. If the laws were followed it would have been necessary to annihilate all the Rajputs". In another letter he declares, "what concern have we with the religion of anybody? Let Jesus follow his own religion and Moses his own".

Another significant feature of the theory of state recorded by Abul Fazl is represented by his justification for the existence of state power with reference to a social contract between the ruler and the ruled. Abul Fazl writes in *Ain-i Akbari* under the title *riwa-i rozi* ("the maintenance of livelihood") : "Since there is infinite diversity in the nature of men and distractions internal and external daily increase, and heavy-footed greed travels post haste, and light-headed rage breaks its reins, where friendship in this demon-haunted waste of dishonour is rare, and justice lost to view, there is in sooth, no remedy for such a world of confusion but in autocracy and this panacea in administration is attainable only in the majesty of just monarchs. If a house or a quarter cannot be administered without the sanctions of hope and fear of a sagacious ruler, how can the tumult of this world-nest of hornets be silenced save by the authority of a vice-regent of Almighty power. How in such a case can the property, lives, honour, and religion of people be protected, notwithstanding that some recluses have imagined that this can be supernaturally accomplished, but a well-ordered administration has never been effected without the aid of sovereign monarch." He further proceeds to formulate that "The dues of sovereignty (*paranj-i jahanbani*) have thus been set forth. The circulation of the means of sustenance, thus, is seen to rest on the justice of prudent monarchs and the integrity of conscientious dependent."[21]

Athar Ali aptly remarks that the words in which Abul Fazl describes *riwa-i rozi* recalls to one's mind Hobbes theory of social contract.[22] But in this connection one might also suggest that the basic concept of a king performing a social function for which he earns the right to receive payment is perhaps borrowed from the theorists of ancient India. This idea is for example very clearly present in the postulates of Narada who explained the king's share of the agricultural produce as his fee (*vetan*) for the protection that he provides to the people. This notion, according to U.N. Ghoshal, appears more emphatically in the writings of the Buddhist authors. It is for instance borne out by a passage in Aryadeva's *Chatuhastaka* where in the course of an imaginary dialogue with a king, the author exclaims : "How can you feel pride—you who are a mere slave of the multitude (*ganadasa*) fed (*bhrita*) by one sixth share (of the crops paid by the subjects) ?[23] Even a cursory examination of this ancient Indian concept of land-revenue being the king's remuneration (*vetan*) makes one see its unmistakeable similarity with Abul Fazl's notion of "*paranj-i-jahanbani*". Similarly, one might note that Abul

Fazl's division of the society into four professional groups, namely, (1) warriors, (2) artificers and merchants, (3) the learned, and (4) husbandmen and labourers and his prescription that it was "obligatory for the king to put each of these into proper places"[24] is strongly reminiscent of the rules framed by the ancient Indian theorists assigning the king a responsibility to enforce *varnadharma*.

At this point one might even be emboldened to say that the incorporation of many elements borrowed from ancient Indian tradition by Abul Fazl in his theory of sovereignty was not an isolated or accidental development. It in fact conformed to a general process of revival, within the medieval Indian polities dominated by the Muslim ruling groups, many precepts and notions relating to statecraft and sovereignty found in the folk-lore as well as the writings of learned theorists of ancient India. To cite a random example of such customs and notions surfacing in a predominantly Muslim state of medieval India, one might refer to a practice introduced during Islam Shah Sur's reign. According to Badauni, in each province, the high nobles were expected to pay weekly obeisance to the king's "shoes and quiver" given to them as symbols of the physical presence of the royalty.[25] The notion implied in this practice that an article of the personal use of a reigning king should be deemed as carrying prestige and authority associated with the royalty and that it could be treated as a symbol of his physical presence is totally alien to Islamic theory. It is on the other hand very reminiscent of similar notions discernible in the *Ramayana*. Another evidence of similar genre is Babur's comment on the situation inside the kingdom of Bengal then ruled by the Saiyed dynasty. "A surprising custom in Bengal", states Babur, "is that hereditary succession is rare. The royal office is permanent—and it is the office that the Bengalis regard with respect—Bengalis say, 'we are faithful to the throne, we loyally obey whoever occupies it' ".[26] It is understandable that this notion of royalty being invested in a material object, a particular throne, should strike Babur as surprising. It, in fact, had no validity in the Islamic tradition outside India. But it is obvious from the above statement of Babur that this notion borrowed from Hindu folk-lore was gradually acquiring acceptance even in the states ruled by Muslim dynasties. Babur's reference to Bengalis being faithful to the throne rather than the person of the king reminds one of the anecdote prefacing the tales of *Singhasan Battisi* that whoever sat on a mound where Vikramaditya's throne was lying buried, acquired the royal attributes of sagacity and justice.[27]

It cannot, however, be denied that under the Delhi Sultanate as well as the Mughal empire, the orthodox *shariat* was adopted as a uniform civil code in most parts of the country. But in this context one must distinguish between the operation of *shariat* as the guiding principle of the state and its use as a useful set of laws that only with slight modification could be applied widely for systematising the procedure of dispensing justice in civil cases. Regarding the enforcement of *shariat* in the medieval Indian states, one actually discerns a two facet development. On the one hand, the general tendency was towards ignoring or modif

Hindu chiefs with the exercise of political authority. At the same time, *shari* came to be tacitly accepted as a useful civil code by all the sections of the ru ing class, including large segments of the Hindu chiefs. The *shariat* wa generally recognised as a workable legal basis for keeping together a ce tralised state. It is of interest to note, in this context, that under some of tl non-Muslim successor states of the Mughal empire, *shariat* continued to l used as the standard legal code. For example we know that in the principali established by Ranjit Singh in the Punjab, there existed qazi's courts ar these courts adjudicated in cases involving Muslims as well as no Muslims.[8] This may suggest that even some of the ostensibly 'theocrati features of the medieval Indian states were not so out of tune with the Indi tradition as is some times imagined. In this connection a remark of Sh Nawaz Khan that for *qazis* "the registers of *deshpandyas* and words of tl *zamindars* are the guide" is worth remembering.[9] It amply indicates tl functional orientation of the *shariat* under the Mughals which made it accep able to the non-Muslim chiefs.

Donald Eugene Smith has credited the British with introducing tl "revolutionary principle" that "it was within the province of the state to regi late and change the society by legislation". This principle, he correctly poin out, was established as a consequence of a tendency on the part of Hinduis to look to the state for the management of its affairs. But he is certainly not c a very firm ground when he makes the categorical statement that "the right legislate in matters of social and religious customs was first asserted only i the British period". Equally untenable is Smith's assumption that the pr British rulers had no "legislative powers".[10] As a matter of fact, eviden relating to the framing of *zawabit* by the medieval Indian rulers for reformir the social and religious customs of Hindus as well as Muslims is almo unending. There also exists considerable evidence suggesting the occasion participation of the medieval Indian states in establishing and maintainir the religious establishments of not only the Muslims but those of no Muslims as well. Sometimes, the Muslim rulers also acted as adjudicators i settling disputes involving different Hindu castes or sects in accordance wit the customary law.

The intervention of the Muslim state in the regulation of the practice *sati* came at a very early stage. On the authority of Ibn Batuta it is known th during the Tughlaq period the relatives of a woman planning to perform *sa* were bound by law to inform the local *shiqdar* who would send one of h agents to be present on the scene to prevent coercion.[11] It seems this kind law continued to exist throughout the Sultanate period but it cannot be sai with any degree of certainty as to what extent it was actually enforced in di ferent parts of the empire. In placing a ban on the burning of young widow whose marriage had not been consummated,[12] Akbar only further extende the operation of a *zabitah* already in existence at least since the Tughla period. Such a law continued to operate until the fall of the Mughal empir Even during Aurangzeb's reign one comes across instances of the admini tration's intervention in the cases of alleged [illegible]

sati.[33] This aspect of the Muslim state's 'interference' with Hindu religion was basically different from the attitude reflected in the measures like imposition of *jiziyah* or ban on idol worship. The law against *sati* was reformist in character and was not motivated by a desire to humiliate Hindus or win converts for Islam. It would further appear that this intervention of the state had a considerable impact at least in the Doab region, where the administration was more effective.[34]

The reforming zeal of the Muslim state with regard to the Indian Islam was still greater but in this respect the general tendency was to suppress practices alien to the orthodox interpretation of Quran and *sunnah*. The attitude of veneration towards tombs, participation of women in religious functions like *urs* etc., and a host of cults, rituals and social customs have remained throughout a distinctive feature of popular Islam in India These were always frowned upon by the Muslim orthodoxy Operating through the state, the *ulama* always strove to remove such *bid'ats*. The measures enumerated by Firuz Tughluq in his memoirs[35] and the imposition of a ban on music and recreational activities by Aurangzeb[36] fall under the same category. Occasionally, certain *zawabit*, negating the principles of *shariat* were also enforced A number of *zawabit* introduced by Akbar such as discouraging child marriages and those between cousins and near relations or prohibiting circumcision of young children, were aimed at introducing reforms in the Muslim social practices which often clashed with the provisions of *shariat*. Akbar actually came very close to prohibiting polygamy He was prepared to make an exception only when the wife failed to give birth to an heir.[38] The ban on cow slaughter and rules prohibiting the slaughter of any kind of animals on certain days during the week were yet other *zawabit* of the same nature which continued to operate for a considerable time even after Akbar.[39]

The earliest piece of evidence regarding the participation of the Muslim state in the establishment of Hindu religious institutions dates back to the Tughluq period. There exists an inscription dated in the Vikrama year 1385 (A.D. 1328) found at Batihagarh (Madhya Pradesh) which announces the construction of a *gow-math* on Muhammad bin Tughluq's order The building, according to the inscription, was completed by Khwaja Jalaluddin who appointed his servant, Dhanau as a manager of the institution.[40] Again according to a contemporary Jain treatise, Muhammad bin Tughluq visited Satrunjaya temples and performed "some acts of devotion appropriate to a leader of Jain Sangha".[41] This evidence points to a similar situation to the one that existed during the early phase of the East India Company's government. Apparently, the political authority found it difficult to keep away from "the impure and degrading services of the pagodas",[42] an indication that the ancient conventions regulating the relationship between the state and Hindu religious institutions continued to carry considerable force under the Muslim dynasties as well.

Such an impression is further reinforced by the ...

of his way in projecting his image as the sole arbiter between various creeds and religions professed by his subjects.[14] Regarding Hinduism, Akbar had assumed certain functions unprecedented in the history of the Muslim State in India. According to traditions surviving among certain communities, he used to give verdicts determining the relative position of smaller groups within a caste. For instance, the Brahmans of Madhya Pradesh proudly recall the fact that Akbar had recognised them as the 'highest and purest' among all the Brahmans.[14] Akbar is also credited with building a temple in Kashmir "for the purpose of binding together the hearts of unitarians in Hindustan, and especially those of His worshippers that live in the province of Kashmir".[15] The Persian inscription that had been composed by Abul Fazl for this temple, in its form as well as content, reminds one of Ashoka's edicts. Another evidence suggesting Mughal authority's participation in the management of religious institutions dates back to 1566, a time when Akbar was still under the influence of the orthodox *ulama*. While returning from the Punjab in that year, he was approached by the heads of the rival groups of Jogis and Sanyasis who had a dispute as to who should occupy a certain spot near the principle shrine at Kurukshetra that was considered more convenient for alms collection. Although Akbar was convinced of the greater validity of the Sanyasis' claim, he desisted from giving a verdict as both the groups wanted him simply to act as a referee during a fight between them, which was, apparently an established way of settling such disputes. In the fight that ensued, the Sanyasis were out-numbered, but eventually they succeeded in putting the Jogis to flight with the help of the royal retainers disguised as mendicants.[16] This feature of the Mughal state persisted till long after Akbar's death. In this respect Jahangir went a step further than Akbar. On one occasion, he even tried to act as a judge with regard to the aesthetic value of an image installed in a temple built by one of his Rajput officers and got it removed.[17]

Such features were by no means confined to the states dominated by Islam. These were to be noticed in a more pronounced form in Hindu states. With regard to Indian Islam, the Hindu rulers tended to adopt the same kind of supervisory role which they would have towards Hinduism. A conspicuous example indicating the above tendency was the communication of the Raja of Calicut to Shah Rukh Mirza seeking his permission to introduce his name in the Friday sermons in the mosques of Calicut.[18] Under the same category would come the Maratha state's policy of providing funds for the maintenance of mosques and such other Muslim establishments situated within the *sawaraj* territory.[19]

While concluding this discussion, I should like to clarify that my comments on the "secular" features of the medieval Indian states are in no way meant to underplay the strong influence that had been exercised for considerable periods by an intolerant and aggressive interpretation of religion. Some times, the state was also used for the propagation of a particular religion. But such periods were few and not very long and it never happened that the trends pulling in the opposite direction ...

so-called Muslim politics of medieval India.

At the same time it would also appear that the medieval Indian state often tended to play the role of an arbiter between different religious groups. It also showed an inclination to promote reforms in the religious and social customs of diverse groups. Occasionally, the state in medieval India even participated in the establishment and maintenance of the religious institutions of not only the dominant groups but those of the less influential ones as well. It is in view of these features of the medieval Indian state that modern Indian secularism may be regarded, in certain respects, an extension of the notions of state-craft suiting the situation of a culturally fragmented ruling class that were apparently evolving in India down to the eighteenth century.

1 Cf. M.N. Roy, *Radical Humanist*, Bombay 14 May 1950, reproduced in *Secularism in India* edited by V.K. Sinha, 1968, p. 151. Donald Eugene Smith, *India as a Secular State*, 1963, pp. 216-34 and Setalvad, *Secularism*, Patel Memorial Lecture, 1965, pp. 17-22.

2 The concept of a state capable of arbitrating between religions was propounded for the first time in its modern context in a resolution passed by the All-India Congress at its Karachi session (1931) wherein, while affirming the ideas of religious liberty and adequate protection to the minorities, it was asserted that "the state shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions". Radhakrishnan later developed the same idea specifically pointing out that it should not be confused "with secularism or atheism". Compare, Setalvad, *Secularism* pp. 17-22.

3 Far a summary of Radhakrishnan's argument that the philosophy of Vedanta promoted religious tolerance see Donald Eugene Smith *India as a Secular State*, p. 147.

4 Iqtidar Alam Khan, 'The Secular State in India: Historical Perspective', in *Essays in Honour of Prof. S.C. Sarkar*, PPH, 1976, p. 166.

5. Muhammad Habib, *The Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanate*, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad Introduction, p. VI.

6 For the prohibition of cow slaughter by Zainul Abidin see Abul Fazl, *A'in-i Akbari*, Vol. II, Nawal Kishore, p. 185.

7 Abdul Qadir Badauni, *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1965, p. 261.

8. From a perusal of *Tazkira-i Pir Hasu Teli* (M.S. Department of History, AMU, ff. 30 b-37 a), completed by Surat Singh a petty official of the Mughal state, during 1644047, one forms an impression that cow slaughter was prohibited in the Punjab down to the middle of Shahjahan's reign.

9. Cf. Abdul Qadir Badauni, *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, Vol. III, p. 118 and *Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique, 1629-1643*, tr. C. Eckford Luard, Vol. II, Oxford, 1827, p. 118.

10. Muhammad Habib and Afsar Umar, *The Political Theory of the Delhi Sultanate*, pp. 38, 97.

11. Nizamul Mulk Tusi, *Siyasatnama*, Tehran, 1348 A.H., p. 216.

12. *Kautilya's Arthsastra* by R. Shamasastry, Mysore, 1967, p. 7 and U.N. Ghoshal [illegible] *Age*, ed. R.C. Majumdar [illegible]

14 *Ain-i Akbari*, Vol. III, Nawal Kishore, pp. 3-4.

15 Cf. Athar Ali, *Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb*, 1966, p. 31.

16 Rafiuddin Ibrahim Shirazi, *Tazkirat ul-Muluk*, MS. British Library, Add. 23 883, Chapter IX

17 Cf. Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, Oxford, 1964, p. 25

18 Cf. Surat Singh, *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, ff. 30 b-37 a

19 S K Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, Ist edition, p. 153. Compare Satish Chandra, 'Jizyah and the State in India during 17th Century', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, XII, pp. 32-40, where he quotes a statement from *Khulasatus Swag*, suggesting that although the revival of *jizyah* engaged Aurangzeb's attention at the commencement of his region, he "postponed the matter due to certain political contingencies"

20 According to Athar Ali, while during 1658-78, the non-Muslim nobles constituted 21.6 per cent of the total number of the nobles, during the last ten years of Aurangzeb's reign their strength rose to 31.6 per cent. *The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb*, p. 31

21 *Ain-i Akbari*, Vol. I, Nawal Kishore, pp. 201-205, compare, Jarrett's translation, Vol. II, pp. 51-55, 58-59

22 Athar Ali, 'Theories of Sovereignty in Islamic Thought in India', published in the proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 1982

23 Compare U N Ghoshal, in *The Classical Age*, ed. by R C Majumdar, pp. 345-46

24 Blochmann, *Ain-i Akbari*, tr., p. 4

25 *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, Vol. I, p. 385

26 *Baburnama*, tr. by A S Beveridge, reprint, London, 1969, pp. 382-83

27 Compare, Franklin Eegerton, *Vikrama's Adventures*, Vols. 2, Harward Oriental Series, 1926

28 See Baron Charles Hugel, *Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab*, 1970, p. 317, wherein it is mentioned that, Ranjit Singh appointed General Avitabile as *qazi* and governor of Lahore.

29 *Maasir ul Umara*, Vol. I, Calcutta, p. 239

30 *India as a Secular State*, pp. 216-31, 304

31 Ibn Batuta, quoted by A B M Habibullah, *Foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, p. 326, Compare Gibb's translation wherein it is not mentioned that the agent of the *shiqdar* would be present at the time of the burning of a widow, *Travels in Asia and Africa*, ed. Denison Ross and Eillen Power, London, 1969, pp. 191-92

32 Badauni, *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, Vol. II, p. 306.

33 Several cases are recorded in *Waqa-i Sarkar Ranthanbor Was Ajmer*, MS. Preserved in Rampur

34 By the time British authority was established in India, the incidence of *sati* in the Gangetic plain had become negligible, while it was widely practiced in Bengal and Rajputana, Donald Eugene Smith, *India as a Secular State*, p 217.

35. *Futuhat-i Firuz Shahi*, ed. Shaikh Abdur Rashid, 1964, pp. 8-9.

36 Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab-ut Lubab*, Vol. II, pp. 213-14

37 Abul Fazl, *Ain-i Akbari*, Vol. I, tr. by Blochmann, pp. 287-88.

38. *Ain-in Akbari* Vol. III, Nawal Kishore, p. 190, and tr., by Jarrett, ed., by J.N. Sarkar, 1948, p. 449.

39. *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, Vol. II, pp. 201, 303, 321-22. Compare *Tazkira-i Pir Hassu Teli*, wherein it is clearly suggested that the ban on cow slaughter continued under Jahangir as well.

quoted by Mehdi Hasan, *Tughluq Dynasty*, 1963, pp 334-35.

41. M.B. Jhavery, *Comparative and Critical Study of Mantrastra*, p 28, quoted by Mahdi Hasan, *Tughluq Dynasty*, p. 321

42 Cf. Romesh Chandra Banerjee, 'The State Patronage to Hindu and Muslim Religions' *Bengal: Past and Present*, Vol III, January-June, 1939, p. 26, wherein are reproduced extracts from a memorandum submitted to the government by nearly two hundred civil, and military officers, including the clergy, of the company's government in Madras, referred to in *The Court of Directors Despatch*, dated October 1837.

43 In Abul Fazl's summary of the *mahzar*, a deliberate attempt is made to create an impression that Akbar had been empowered to arbitrate not only between the orthodox schools of Muslim jurisprudence but also between different religions and sects Compare *Akbarnama*, Vol. III, pp. 269-70. For the original text of the *mahzar* Cf Badauni, *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, Vol. II, p. 271.'

44 Dev Raj Chanana, 'The Sanskritist and Indian Society', *Enquiry*, New Series, Vol II, No 2, 1965, p 54.

45 Muhammad Askari Hussain *Durrul Manshur*, quoted by Blochmann, *Ain-in Akbari*, Vol. I, tr, pp. LIV-LV

46 Abul Fazl, *Akbarnama*, Vol. II, p 287, Badauni, *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, Vol II, p 93

47 *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, ed. by Saivid Ahmad Khan, Ghazipur and Aligarh, 1863-64, p. 124

48 Kamal al-din Abdul Razzaq, (British Library, Or 1291, f. 204 b) cited by Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, p. 20.

49 There exist a large number of such grants To quote at random, one may refer to a *sanad* dated A.D. 1746-47 giving a grant of one and a half *bigha* of 'land for the expenses on account of *Chiraghbatti* and other services' of a newly built mosque in the village Mahagiri Pakhadi in *qasba* Thana, Cf *The Peshwa's Diaries*, Vol II, document number 171, p 101 (For this reference I am indebted to Dr Mahendra Pal Singh.)

*PRINCY DHARMARATNE**

Aid and the Development of the Third World

DEVELOPMENT IDEOLOGY is seen as a response to economic needs and crises in the period of time in which it evolves. Western industrial development working with a *laissez faire* economic outlook, which had already been generated with the demise of feudalism and the release of the sociological base needed for the advent of 'economic man', proceeded as a self-generating force. Development gathered momentum, fanned by technological innovations of the Industrial Revolution and accelerated by the back-up of financial institutions and simultaneous developments in transport, further strengthened by the opening up of overseas colonial territories to serve the needs of development.

The socialist strategy typified by the Soviet Union's response to development after 1917 was a markedly self-generated response worked out under a tightly planned economic framework of a centralised capital-intensive industrial base, which provided it with the ground work for the economic "take-off" after the Russian revolution.

Development aid to the Third World, in contrast to development ideologies of the past, has grown as a hand-out from the Western world to the developing world and does not generate a self-propelled development process. Hence, an analysis of the historical evolution of the idea of development aid, the motives behind such hand-outs bearing in mind the world economic climate within which aid continues to be granted, and illustrative experiences of typical recipients of aid would be instructive in an assessment of the Third World in the contrasting responses to development worked out after decolonisation.

The twin institutions—the IMF and the World Bank—the prime aid-givers of today were conceived in an era when more than two-thirds of the Third World were non-existent, and were therefore not framed with Third World objectives in mind. It was only Latin America that then constituted what is now known as the Third World. The world had gone off the Gold Standard in 1939. Britain had lost her primacy in world trade and investment, and was being replaced by the U.S. as the foremost international power. The Great Depression of 1930 had strained the international monetary mechanism. Nation-states in Europe were adjusting to the new economic policies of Welfare Economics with their emphasis on minimum

wage legislation, and full employment. The swing away from the automatic adjustment process of the Gold Standard meant that European states were breaking up into isolated economic entities managing their own economies, with exchange controls, import quotas and import substitution. Such an international system would give a blow to the U.S. whose trade and investment potential after the end of the Second World War was at its peak.

The world system established under U.S. hegemony after the Second World War was not free-tradist as that under British hegemony in the nineteenth century.

Trade liberalisation was through bilateral and multilateral negotiations rather than through unilateral means. The main objective of U.S. imperial domination was a guarantee of an "open door" not primarily to trade but to free enterprise, particularly against threats of nationalisation and protection. Hence the need to devise a system which would harness to its maximum U.S. investment interests, safeguarding trade interests as well, and pursuing U.S. hegemonic influence in the post-War international scene, whilst at the same time reconciling individual economic interests of the nation-states of Europe. The Bretton Woods institutional structure was the answer—the IMF and the World Bank being fashioned for the purpose of identifying the tools for a world economy open to U.S. investment and trade. As Eugene Black, a former President of the World Bank, stated in drumming up support for aid in the fifties, "Our Foreign Aid Programme constitutes a distinct benefit to American business."

The safeguard worked into the IMF conditions for the purpose of creating guarantees for foreign investment as the primary objective was that the Fund frowned upon any distortions to free market forces such as government interventionist policies, protectionism, rationing and subsidies. For safeguarding U.S. trade interests, the Fund's ideology maintained that liberalised imports must be encouraged, and also discouraged discriminatory trade and currency practices such as multiple exchange rates which were seen as barriers to trade expansion. The U.S. was to be the final arbiter of exchange rates by subjecting nations to exchange rate adjustment with U.S. approval. The Fund's pool of resources totalling 29 billion was to serve as an incentive in favour of multilateral trade practices and against national and bilateral solutions to payments problems.

For almost 12 years after the Second World War, the U.S. remained the sole disbursor of foreign aid. In moving from the status of a U.S. dominated world economy to a world system in which newcomers such as Germany and Japan were moving into core status, the U.S. found that it could still maintain the centre of gravity of an increasingly integrated world economy by forming a consortium of European aid-givers. The consortium was formed with the aim of 'sharing the burden' but, in effect, as business partners in a transnational expansion of capital overseas. As a memorandum from the Confederation of British Indsutry to the House of Commons put it in 1969. "for British Industry [illegible]

Hayter, *Creation of World Poverty*). The illusion of multilateralism was useful; the dominant voting power for the U.S. and the informal influence she exerted over the Fund assured her a key role in its objectives. No money would be disbursed counter to the rules of the Fund which meant that the "Good Housekeeping Seal" of the IMF becomes a precondition for aid. This was a convenient mode of making the aid-givers accept the U.S. influence and the aid-receivers adhere to the dictates of the U.S. policy.

To assure success, the Fund maintained an "old boy network" in the key access points to economical and political power in the Third World. These men were Western educated and steeped in the Fund's liberal ideology manning the strategic arsenals of economic and political power in Third World central banks and finance ministries. In other instances, 'our men' staffed the planning agencies of the Third World. Professor Bell—a U.S. citizen was on the staff of the Planning Board of Pakistan. World Bank and IMF representatives are on the staff of the Korean Development Institute. The Central Bank and economic ministries in Zaire are run by IMF and World Bank officials.

A look at the evaluation techniques of multilateral agencies such as the World Bank or bilateral agencies like the U.K. Overseas Development Authority will throw light on the directional flow of aid with the thinking that shapes the grant of aid. Whatever the Manuals of Operating Procedure might say on the objectives of aid, both agencies ultimately use the monetary criteria of the rate of return in assessing the impact of a project under aid. If the primary function of aid is to promote development in poor countries, then the legitimate criteria for assessment of projects for further disbursement of funds should have a strong bias towards its impact on target groups such as low income farmers. However, the World Bank's budget is financed by shareholders—national, corporate and individual. The Overseas Development Authority disbursements are responsible to the U.K. taxpayer. Both of these and other lending institutions have to assess impact by the monetary rate of return to show that aid works. The Overseas Development Authority lays less stress on the rate of return although evaluation is done before or during the life of the project with little assement on impact, whilst in any case few projects are subjected to evaluation under the ODA scheme.

Nearly 10 years have elapsed since Robert McNamara asked the World Bank to switch its lending policy in the direction "of more aid to the poorest". to meet the basic needs of the very poor, and yet there are only a handful of projects where one can with certainty say on which income groups the import of aid was felt. In the World Bank Report for 1982, an attempt was made in the direction of the new policy by using the rate of return on small farmer projects, and numbers of small farmers reached. However, it is not known whether the criteria of reaching the poorest has been satisfied. There is also a larger Fund disbursement in the direction of agricultural, educational and health projects with the Fund's change in policy objectives. However, as long as aid agencies treat the rate of [illegible]

projects and disbursement of funds, there cannot be a basic change in aid disbursement strategy.

Third World debt ratios as well as other indices are a revealing indication of the path takén by aid vis-a-vis development. By 1981, 75 per cent of the loans taken by the Third World were used to meet debt service requirements, vhich meant that only 25 per cent was available for development, and that at high interest rates charged by international commercial banks. In other words, the Third World countries are now forced to borrow to pay off their past debts. In 1982, debts of 22 Third World countries were re-scheduled; and international bankers realised the serious repercussions of the vast magnitude of Third World debt and virtually ceased their operations, leaving he Third World countries faced with serious difficulties. By the end of 1983, otal UDC debt aggregated 800 billion dollars. Of this Brazil, Mexico, Argenina, Venezuela and the Phillippines accounted for the bulk of the figure. Should Mexico and Brazil, with a debt of 100 billion dollars each, renounce heir debt service obligations, nine major U.S. banks would be forced out of business.

Debt Indicators for Developing Countries, 1983

Ratio of Debt to GNP	26.7 per cent
Ratio of Debt to Exports	121.4 per cent
Debt Service Ratio	20.7 per cent
Total Debts Outstanding and Disbursed	595.8 billion dollars
Official	208.5 billion dollars
Private	387.3 billion dollars

rom 'Economic Crisis, Third World and NIEO' by Newton Gunasinghe and C. Abeysekera, based on a sample f 90 underdeveloped countries

Here the ratio of debt to exports is useful in showing the amount of exports the Third World would need to meet its total debts—it was 121.4 per ent of total exports in 1983.

If aid leads to development, then the corollary should be a plus in the balance sheets of the aid-receivers, but the actual experience reveals the ontrary.

Brazil—the largest debtor in the developing world with a 100 billion lollar debt—has taken the IMF conditionalities seriously. But the IMF presribed economic adjustment proceses are leading to ever-increasing social pressures. The Fund's economic prescription—wage cuts, cuts in governnent expenditure affecting employment and welfare, cut-backs on the budget deficit, which reached 40 billion dollars in 1984—are affecting the poorer strata of Brazilian society, broadening the income disparity and compounding existing social tensions. Brazil has met the Fund's targets except or inflation, which now stands at 220 per cent. She now wants as good a deal s Mexico from the Fund. But at what social cost ? Its record of income disribution is notoriously bad. According to British official sources, during the ears [illegible]

cent rose from 12 to 18 per cent. In other words, one per cent of the rich received more than what the poorest half received. According to UNICEF statistics, 3 million Brazilian children live in absolute destitution. Brazil is requesting the World Bank for more aid to agriculture though this itself is not re-distributive. Labour unrest is taking its toll on industry. Unions are demanding pay increases. Thousands of dockers, bus, railway and airport workers resumed picketing after suspending strike action in May 1985, demanding pay increases. And yet, the country's armaments and aircraft industries are booming with record sales, making the rich richer and helping to aggaravate military tensions around the globe.

"For us debt is poverty, stagnation and lack of investment," said President Alfonsin of Argentina. A country, which at the turn of the century equalled Canada and Australia in international economic status, Argentina is now far poorer than it ought to be, given its abundance of grain, cattle, minerals and last but not the least, the foreign aid she receives. It is today a poor nation saddled with mounting social tensions.

Threatened with the loss of future credits, Argentina's President was compelled to accept the IMF austerity package which he had dubbed at Cartagena in 1984 as "recessionary". According to an Opposition Peronist Deputy, "Today in the North, they have signed our Death Certificate for economic recovery." Alfonsin's agreement with the IMF imposes severe austerity measures on Argentina including cuts in public spending, higher taxes and a large currency devaluation. The touchiest part of the agreement has to do with wage cuts, though Alfonsin had repeatedly promised 6–8 per cent increase in wages in real terms. However, "Labour is threatening the nation with paralysis whilst the Foreign Banks are holding the economy hostage." Workers had suffered a 50 per cent loss of purchasing power during the military regime. Anyway a 700 per cent inflation erodes the benefits of any wage increase. The Confederation of Labour threatened a nation-wide "battle plan", which crippled industry. In June 1984, some two million workers in government and in almost every major economic sector launched strikes and slow-downs in protest against acceptance of IMF directives.

A UNICEF report revealed that 35 per cent of Argentinian children were malnourished. Inflation stood at 700 per cent. A serious attempt made by Latin American States under Argentina's leadership to persuade the North to take account of economic, social and political needs of the debtor nations, floundered in spite of the important role played by Latin American debtors in U.S. banking institutions. The U.S. was able to drive a wedge into this united action by favouring some nations with better terms.

The geopolitical stake the U.S. has in its backyard—Mexico—assured the latter most favoured treatment and she was held up as a model, which adjusted dramatically to IMF prescriptions. It was bad politics for the U.S. to isolate her southern neighbour. The U.S. needed cheap Mexican labour for her industries, while Mexico in turn needed American tourists. Moreover, Mexico had oil. For all these reasons she was able [illegible]

With a political system which seems repressive in comparison with Brazil's or Argentina's, for Mexico the adjustment process was easier.

Yet, Mexico's economic, social and political balance sheet is far from being satisfactory. Mexico faces an economic crisis that is the worst in the past half century with cuts in government spending induced by the spending spree of the seventies. The peso to dollar exchange rate has risen eight-fold in the past three years—from 27 :1 to 220 :1. The annual inflation rate of 60 per cent is of course low by Latin American standards.

Social tensions are on the rise. There have been five eruptons of tension between December and February 1985; the last one erupted on the issue of rigged mayoral elections.

Of the Third World debtors, South Korea's case with her 47 billion dollar debt is somewhat different. For two decades it has maintained an 8 per cent growth rate. From textiles and shoes, it is now on the high-tech trail of microprocessors and video recorders. Her success is largely due to her switch to high-tech industry. She is now the second largest producer of basic electronic components, running behind Japan only. Korea has struck partnerships with well known Western firms in search of know-how, equipment and funds. The per capita income has risen from 100 dollars in the sixties to 2000 dollars at present. Two-thirds of the Koreans consider themselves part of the middle classes. Korea's exports account for 30 per cent of the GNP.

Yet, even here all is not rosy. Korea's 50 largest *chaebols* swallowed more than half of her GNP. They are heavily over-borrowed, and 50 conglomerates have a debt equalling four and a half times their net worth. They swallow up a large part of Korea's wealth and have stymied the growth of small business. Prosperity has spread to the large cities and the industrial giants, but small businesses have yet not felt the impact of the new Eldorado. Unlike Japan, which has managed to spread her post-War wealth rather evenly, Korea is beset by a wide income gap between the rich and the poor. Deep pockets of poverty exist throughout the country.

Korean *chaebols* are inefficient. The economy is in need of investment funds. The U.S. and Europe are protecting their markets against Korean exports. Chun's move to liberalise the political system may well result in economic instability. Six per cent of Korea's GNP goes for military spending to keep the communist North at bay. The U.S. has the whip hand here as the withdrawal of its second largest force from the northern frontier can threaten the Korean miracle with instability. As a Western banker put it : "it is a house of cards".

What is clear from the foregoing analysis is that the solution recommended by the IMF and World Bank only aggaravates the existing debt problem. First, the monetarist philosophy of the IMF and World Bank lays emphasis on relaxation of subsidies, wage controls, the free play of market forces for consumer essentials such as water, electricity and transport [illegible]

development. Prolonged austerity is bound to shatter the legitimacy of political structures.

Secondly, as Henry Kissinger has admitted, "The debt crisis is a symptom of a cause of a structural crisis." The accumulation of past debt and the debt crisis itself reveal the inability of most of the Third World countries to drum up exports in the long run to solve the balance of payments problem, and is thus a refutation of the theory that liberalisation can serve as a cure for long term payments problems haunting these countries.

In brief, the world recession is bringing about a falling off of demand for Third World exports. At the same time, the problem is further complicated by large price falls for the Third World products, the bulk of which constitutes raw materials. The result is a worsening of the terms of trade for the Third World countries. This takes the form of a structural crisis and must be tackled with an adjustment process that addresses itself to the key factors behind the crisis. A persisting deterioration in the balance of payments position of the Third World countries needs a means whereby an expansion of exports can be brought about whilst curtailing imports. Instead, the IMF forces these nations not to solve this problem where export earnings are inadequate, but to go in for foreign borrowing in the name of development, which only warrants more debt to pay a part of the existing debt. As most of the Third World countries are doing the same, and on an extended scale, they are being made to borrow on high interest rates, making them less and less capable of meeting their debt service commitments. Anytime now the debt bomb can explode.

The dilemma facing the world economy reduces itself to who is going to bear the burdens of the crisis—the North or the South. For the North, the problem is one of avoiding a bank crash. For the South, it is a desire to avoid debt servicing and promote growth. The success of monetarism and the consequent expansion of credit in place of direct investment are an expression of the fact that the North is once again gaining at the expense of the South.

*SANAT BOSE**

A Note on Labour Movement in Bengal (1920-21)

THE OBJECT of the present note is to acquaint readers with an important source material for the study of the labour movement in Bengal (1920-21): *Report of the Committee on Industrial Unrest in Bengal, 1921*, published by the Government of Bengal in 1921. Few scholars working on the history of Indian labour movement are aware of the existence of this Report and fewer still have pointed out its significance as a source material, having referred to it only casually. Yet in no other published official document do we get such detailed information on the labour movement in Bengal at a very crucial moment in the history of our freedom movement (1920 and first half of 1921) in India.

It should be clearly mentioned here that this note only seeks to highlight some of the facts presented in the Report and is not a study of the labour movement *per se,* during the period under discussion.

The significance of this Report lies in the fact that apart from its depiction of the various aspects of 'labour unrest' of the period (as perceived by the Committee) like causes, demands, course and duration of movement in the different industries (including public transport and public utility services), the very decision to set up this Committee resulted from an awareness (on the part of the ruling class) of the grave situation brought about by the widespread labour movement and the urgent need to combat the 'forces of disruption at work'.

Previous labour enquiry committees were set up in an entirely different situation and for an altogether different purpose: the prime objective of these enquiry committees was to inquire into the causes of labour shortage complained of (from time to time) by various employers of labour. If other issues like wage rate, living conditions, modes of recruitment, etc., also came up before these committees, they were given only peripheral attention. The initiative to set up such committees came not so much from the government as from the employers, because earlier labour movements did not pose any serious threat to the ruling class or to the stability of the alien state power. While studying the report under consideration, the above background should be kept in view.

Along with the main findings and recommendations of the Committee, the Report encloses two appendices : the first dealing with details of strike incidence (in tabular form) and the second providing a list of witnesses examined by the Committee. Unfortunately, details of evidence collected from these witnesses are not included in the latter appendix. I do not know if they were ever published by the Committee or the Department of Industry (Government of Bengal) which was authorised for the first time to deal with labour problems of the province.

On March 4, 1921, K.C. Roy Choudhury, nominated labour member of the Bengal Legislative Council, moved the following resolution in the Council : "This Council recommends to the Governor in Council that a Committee be formed to inquire into the causes of recent strikes of workmen in Bengal and to advise what remedial measures should be adopted."

Explaining why such an enquiry was necessary, the mover in the course of his speech said : "Strikes and concerted refusal to work seem to be the order of the day and have lately as in the case of Tramways and Lilooah Carriage Workshop men, culminated in terrorism and violence unprecedented in the history of Bengal. It is therefore high time, Sir, that a serious and impartial enquiry into the root casue of the new industrial insurrection is made promptly and vigorously to allay panic and reassure public opinion and devise remedies." The motion was passed unanimously and the Governor appointed an Enquiry Committee consisting of nine members, including nominated labour members and representatives of British industries in the Council. It was presided over by J.H. Kerr, Industry Member of the Government of Bengal and the report was published in July 1921.

This was probably the only occasion when the Bengal Legislative Council, composed as it was of persons representing heterogeneous interests, agreed unanimously to support a motion brought forward by a non-official member. Not only that, but the government also lost no time in announcing the formation and composition of the proposed Committee, and, as we have mentioned earlier, the Committee completed its investigation and submitted its report within four months from the date the motion was moved and accepted.

Such prompt and urgent action on the part of the government indicates how grave the situation was in the industrial belts of the province. "Strikes and concerted refusal to work" by the entire working class affecting almost all the industries, created such panic in the minds of all those who were, in some way or the other, linked directly or ideologically with the "establishment", that they chose to forget all difference of race, caste or creed and joined together unanimously to suggest means of restoring 'peace and order' in the arena of industrial relations. While previously for the purpose of maintaining a "peaceful relationship" between labour and capital, the government and the employers of labour could think of no other weapons in their armoury than that of repressive measures, the new situation demanded some other solution : creating appropriate (legal or semi-legal) machinery for handling labour trouble. Simultaneously, for the first time. a lar[illegible]

leaders and social workers also began to take more and more active interest in labour problems with the view to solving them through constitutional, non-agitational means. It was this common motive that united all the members of the Council so that Roy Choudhury's resolution could get smooth sailing.

In order to appreciate the anxiety of the establishment, it may be pointed out that between 1 July and 31 December 1920, i.e., within a period of six months, there occurred in Bengal 104 strikes—89 in the Calcutta industrial area, 12 in the district of Burdwan (mainly in the coalfields), 2 in the district of Barisal and 1 at Kharagpur. In the first quarter of the next year (i.e., between 1 January and 31 March 1921), there were 32 strikes. Thus, within a short span of nine months, 137 strikes broke out in Bengal, covering, as noted earlier, almost all the existing industries in the province.

Of these 137 strikes, "74 were due solely to demands for higher wages, while in 36 other cases demands for higher wages were coupled with other demands." The Report also informs us that "Of these 110 strikes, no less than 82 strikes occurred in the last quarter of 1920, which also accounted for 89 strikes out of the total number of 137. Of the 27 strikes not concerned with wages, 13 were due to claims regarding overtime, khoraki, strike pay, hours of work, shifts and other conditions of work, 10 arose out of the dismissal or discharge of workmen and similar disciplinary actions, 2 were due to demands for the dismissal of individuals, 1 was due to demand for better facilities for prayers, for Muhammadan employees, and *one strike must be classed as sympathetic, in that the men went out in support of a strike that was being fought elsewhere for objects that would not benefit themselves.*" (Italics mine).

The Report also gives us an interesting breakdown of the strikes : "Of the 110 strikes, in which there was a demand for higher wages, 4 were successful in that the increases demanded were conceded in full, 48 were partially successful in that some increases were conceded, though not the full increases demanded, 17 ended in the resumption of work with increases promised or deferred for consideration, but not finally settled, while 36 failed in that work was resumed with the demands for higher wages definitely rejected. No definite information is forthcoming as to the terms on which the remaining five wage strikes were settled. In 1 out of the 27 miscellaneous strikes, the demands of the workers were met either in whole or in part."

Industrywise, we get the following picture about the incidence of strikes. Five strikes or more occurred in the following industries :

	No. of Strikes
1. Engineering, foundry and metal works	33
2. Jute mills	27
3. Transport and storage of merchandise in the port and city of Calcutta	19
4. Public utility services	12
5. Collieries	

7. Railways 5
8. Printing presses 5

The Report also gives us in a tabular form, details of all the strikes mentioned above. Since such details are not easily available elsewhere, a few samples of the type of information available, are given at the end of this paper.

We next pass on to present some select information on strikes as noted in the Report.

1. Strike by Bengal Government press employees (total number 900) which lasted for 12 days, starting from 16 July 1920;

Dissatisfaction with communique of Government of India announcing general terms of a proposed revision of pay, etc., of Government presses, these including—

(a) 40 per cent rise in piece rates
(b) standardised hours
(c) continuance of piece work system

The last was particularly objected to, and was made the main issue in the strike. In the Remarks Column, we find the following comments:

This strike followed in the wake of a similar strike in the Government of India Press, which began on 15 July 1920. The grievances of Government press employees, particularly that regarding piece work, had been discussed at meetings of the Press Employees Association, a recently formed union. The deputation of 14 July 1920 were selected at a meeting of the Association. During the strike very frequent public meetings were held. At these, Association officials appeared, but politicians exerted most sway, the men returning from one party to another, and each holding out hopes of Government's surrender. The Association's funds, such as they were, do not appear to have been called upon to any appreciable degree, but a special strike fund of over Rs. 1,000 is claimed to have been collected from publicists and spent on strike relief.

2. Workers numbering 3,000, of the Hooghly Jute Mills, Kidderpore, struck work on 6 September 1920, the strike continuing for 4 days, demanding a 10 per cent rise in wages. On this strike, we get the following details:

6 September 1920: For a fortnight periodic deputations ask the manager for a 10 per cent increase alleging that other mills are getting it. He denies the allegation, but says that if others get it they shall also. The spinners go on strike, and at midday the whole mill is closed down.

8 September 1920: An increase of 10 per cent on pre-war rates to all operatives announced. Effect from 13 September 1920.

9 September 1920: All hands return to work.

Comments made in the Remarks Column above throw some light on the communication system which existed in the activities of the working class. This, in spite of lack of proper, formal organisations, enabled workers

workers of other regions. Individually or groupwise, they transmitted information by personal visits to other factories situated in other industrial belts. This is why some common demands could be raised by workers of different jute mills even though there was no local or central organisation of jute workers. This is corroborated by the following comments of the Enquiry Committee : "A similar demand was simultaneously on foot on the Howrah side. Three concerns conceded a rise of 10 per cent (with effect from 13 September 1920) on the day this strike began. Others in Metiabruz conceded same rise immediately afterwards."

After workers of North Union Jute Mill, Sealdah (numbering 3,000) struck work for seven days from 14 September 1920, they not only succeeded in getting the wage rise as demanded (though not from the date they demanded but from 13 September), but the "same rise was conceded to the remaining jute mills the week following, with effect from 4 October 1920."

The comments made in the Remarks Column regarding strikes in the jute mills within the Howrah city jurisdiction, viz., Fort William Jute Mills, Ganges Jute Mills, and Howrah Jute Mills (all in Sibpur), having 6,000, 10,000 and 11,500 workers respectively and strikes lasting for 13, 11 and 11 days, starting from 23, 25 and 25 November respectively, deserve serious notice :

> Special police activity throughout, extra armed men being drafted in.
>
> These three concerns are the only jute mills in the Howrah city industrial group. The Hooghly Jute Mill across the river is comparatively isolated at the Kidderpore side, and belongs by intercourse to the Howrah group, quite a proportion of the labour of the Howrah Mills living in its neighbourhood. The four rises of wages (10 per cent, 10 per cent, 20 per cent and 40 per cent) conceded to the jute industry between 1917 and these strikes were *each preceded by strikes* (italics mine) in this group of four concerns.

(An interesting point may be noted here. In the case of the jute industry, initiative for strike movements almost always came from the weaving department.)

The following account of the strike of workers of Bengal Iron Works, Kulti, has been given in such detail that it is worth quoting the entire Report on this particular strike, because even police records do not always go into such minute details. The factory employed 11,000 workers and the strike began on 25 November 1920, ending on 1 December 1920. The number of striking workers increased from 600 on the first day, to 11,000 on the third day. Regarding the causes, the Report says :"General unrest regarding wages precipitated by objection of foundry men to unaccustomed orders of foundry foreman and to recently introduced system of payment by contract."

On the course of the strike :

25 November 1920 : [illegible]

b) cancellation of his order that they should collect and remove their own scraps; and
c) time wages instead of contract piece wages.

General Manager offers to suspend foreman pending proper enquiry. Settlement deferred owing to orders of Swamy Biswananda (follower of Gandhi), whom men's leaders had sent for, that case should be handed over to him. Men's leaders visit him : he raises question of wage : they tell him a rise of 20 per cent is expected on arrival (December) of Chairman from England : he advised a general demand for 50 per cent rise backed by a general strike of whole works. Letters sent inviting Gandhi and Lajpat Rai.

6 November 1920 : Sleeper Shop go out (800 men). Meeting held, presided over by Swami Biswananda and attended by the General Manager, the Manager of Foundry Department, the Additional Superintendent of Police and the Subdivisional Magistrate. General Manager explains how he proposes to meet the men's demands. Men apparently inclined to return, but the Swami lays down that a more final settlement should first be made. Meeting breaks up after five hours' session. Announced that the whole works will go on strike from the following morning.

7 November 1920 : All hands join the strikers (total about 11,000).

8 November 1920 : Subdivisional Magistrate interviews the Swami and impresses on him his personal responsibility in the event of outbreak of violence.

8 November 1920 : The Swami presents himself at the General Manager's bungalow in the evening with three of his Committee (recently constituted Barakar Labour Association) and asks for interview on behalf of the men. Audience refused. On driving away, the party assaulted by some European employees of the company. Rumour spread that the Swami had been shot or confined in General Manager's bungalow. Some 2,000 strikers armed with this prepare to attack General Manager's bungalow. Trouble averted by the appearance of Swami, who urges non-violence.

? November 1920 : The Swami declining to do so, the Sub-divisional Officer institutes a case in respect of the previous day's assault on the Swami. Sub-divisional Officer induces Swami's Committee and the General Manager to meet the following day.

? November 1920 : Meeting postponed owing to arrival of two Barristers. Meeting fixed for following day.

December 1920 : Meeting held at Barakar Dak Bungalow and settlement arrived at. All hands return to work.

Strike partially successful. Terms conceded.

1. General Manager to sign an expression of regret for the assault on the Swami drafted by workers' representative.
2. No victimisation on account of the strike.
3. Strikers' demand for a 50 per cent ...

Chairman for decision; the General Manager giving a written undertaking that there will be some increase of wages and that a final decision will be given within a month.

4. Contract work to be abolished and all workers to revert to the basic wage of 1919 plus 30 per cent unless already in receipt of that amount.
5. The Foreman and Head Mistry of the General Casting Shop to be removed from the shop for a month, during which an enquiry to be held as to their conduct and result submitted to Chairman for his orders.
6. The practice of deducting two days' wages for one day's absence to be discontinued.
7. (a) Workers on daily pay to receive a bonus of half a day's pay for six full days' work done in one week, in addition to overtime for work on week days and Sundays; and (b) Full wages to be paid for X'mas day, Good Friday, New Year's Day.

Half wages to be paid for:

Puja	2 days
Diwali	1 day
Holi	1 day
Id	1 day
Muharram	1 day
Bakr-Id	1 day

8. (a) Sick leave with pay to be granted on production of medical certificate; and
(b) management to pay more attention to arrangements for medical attendance.
9. (a) General Manager to denounce ill-treatment of workers and racial differentiation in a written circular, and
(b) all complaints to be referred to a Workmen's Committee meeting once a month.
10. All workers to be paid with effect from December 1920 irrespective of the day upon which the company may call upon them actually to work.
11. Workers to receive cinders and coke grease for consumption as fuel.

We now take the case of a strike by conductors and drivers of Calcutta and Howrah Tramways. This combined with the strikes of workers (1,100) of Oriental Gas Company (which supplied gas for the city's street lights and domestic consumption), sweepers (2,500) of Calcutta Corporation, and taxi drivers and professional drivers of private cars, Calcutta (3,000), lasting for 13, 6 and 15 days respectively specially created that feeling of insecurity among the middle class or 'bhadralok' residents of the city which was expressed so bluntly by K.C. Choudhury in his resolution on industrial unrest (referred earlier).

Tramway workers struck work on 1 October 1920 [illegible]

detailing grievances. After this date several meetings are held and it is given out that, unless favourable orders are passed on petitions presented to the management, a strike will be called on 1 October 1920.

30 September 1920 · Men's petition received by company at noon. Circular letter issued to all depots asking men to send deputation to discuss matters with management at 11 a.m. the following day.

1 October 1920 : The men go on strike without further notice.

2 October 1920 : Manager attempts to get in touch with strikers, who refer him to the Commissioner of Police. He interviews the Commissioner of Police and arranges to meet men on Sunday morning at one of the depots.

3 October 1920. None found at that depot. Goes to another and makes offers. There told the matter is in hand of appointed leaders. Later informed that men and leaders are assembled at Belgachia (7 p.m.). Goes there and arranges terms at 2 p.m.

4 October 1920 : Partial start up. Finally settled by concession with retrospective effect to increased rates as from September 1920, at the request of two leaders not present the night before.

Results · Partial success Concessions granted

1. Rise of wages time scale from Rs. 19-Rs. 25 to Rs. 24-Rs. 28 with effect from 1 September 1920.
2. Improved terms regarding uniform.
3. Dismissed men reinstated.

Committee's comments as stated in the Remarks Column :

The dismissed men were regarded by the management as mischief makers

The men's representatives were two conductors, two drivers and five gentlemen not in the service of the Tramway Company.

Following the strike, the Calcutta Tramway Employees Union was formed.

Here reference should also be made of a strike that took place in the muffusil town of Barisal (East Bengal). On 16 November 1920, workers (numbering 598) of Steamer Workshop of Rivers Steam Navigation Co., and India General Navigation Co. at Barisal, struck work, demanding :

1. 20 per cent rise in wages
2. 20 per cent cost of living allowance on same
3. free medical treatment
4. pure drinking water at shop
5. annual increments of Rs. 10 for at least 10 years.

The workers' cause was pleaded by a local pleader at Barisal and a barrister at the Calcutta headquarters office.

We conclude the article with a short review of the "remedial measures" recommended by the Committee, to deal with future labour unrest :-

Analysing the incidence of strikes over a period of nine months (July 1920 to March 1921), the Report says:

> The strike fever thus reached its height during the middle quarter of the period under review (i.e., October to December 1920) as the result chiefly of demands for increased wages, but just as the strikes in the first quarter (i.e., July to September 1920) were due largely to other than economic causes, so also *the demands of the workers in the last quarter, after the fever had spent itself, took the form in many instances of trivial complaints which in normal times would never have resulted in strikes.* (Italics mine)

Further,

> The recent outbreak of strikes in Bengal was in fact due as much to a general spirit of unrest as to the specific causes alleged in individual cases, and even if every individual grievance which has been put forward in connection with strikes were remedied, the unrest would continue to give rise to further disputes until its root cause had been removed. Industrial unrest is only one phase of the general unrest which has prevailed since the close of the war in every country in the world.

Before suggesting remedial measures, the Committee concluded its analysis of the strike events by saying:

> Important differences of opinion and matters of principle cannot always be settled without lengthy negotiations often resulting in a temporary rupture of relations between employers and employed, but we are convinced that many of the strikes which have occurred during the last nine months could have been prevented or could have been settled more speedily if a more cordial spirit of cooperation had prevailed, and if some machinery had existed for bringing the parties together immediately the difference occurred and before it had time to develop into a serious dispute.

The remedial measures suggested, logically followed from the trend of the above analysis:

a) Creation of Joint Works Committees in industrial concerns, "containing representatives of both employers and employed",

b) Conciliation Board or panel, "consisting of about twenty members to be appointed by government and to include a due proportion of all classes of the community, both European and Indian, and representatives of both capital and labour", and

c) Creation of a Labour Bureau, which would supply "prompt and full information regarding the ever-changing industrial situation" to the government. The Committee strongly felt that the "government should have full information regarding these occurrences if they are to maintain a proper watch over the industrial situation". However, pending the establishment of such an information bureau, the Committee "would recommend all commercial and industrial associations to urge upon their members the importance of supplying full and early information regarding industrial unrest to the [illegible] Intelligence [illegible]

Thus, apart from immediate success or defeat, strikes of this period for the first time, forcibly established the status of the working class as a class vis-a-vis State and capital in Bengal.

... OF STRIKES IN BENGAL WHICH BEGAN IN THE SECOND HALF OF 1920

Works affected and locality	*Dept. in which originating*	*Full strength*	*No. of strikers*	*No affected*	*Date on which dispute began and ended**	*Cause*	*Course*	*Results*	*Remarks*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
New Central Jute Mills, Choosury	**Weaving**	**4000**	**650**	**4000**	6 July to 9 July 1920	Proposed arrest of weavers concerned in serious assaults upon European assistant	5 July 1920-Assault upon assistant (evening). 6 July 1920-Weavers demonstrate against proposed arrest of assailants of assistant, and go on strike (morning). Rest of mill locked out (afternoon). 8 July 1920—Manager promises deputation not to proceed again anyone beside the four accused (who had got away), if the men return to work (evening). 9 July 1920—All return	Partial success	The assault case was brought under prosecution
Radha Kissan Cotton Mills, Choosury	**Carding**	1000	1000	1000	7 July to 9 July 1920	Demand for an increase of wages, created by increases granted in other mills. Increase demanded 12½ per cent	7 July 1920–The carding Department strike at 2 p m and are followed by the rest of the mill. 9 July 1920—Employers announce an increase of 6¼ per cent and all resume work (morning).	Partial success	This made a total rise of 31¼ per cent, since Dec 1919. They had received an increase of 25 per cent in Jan. 1920 in response to a demand for an increase of 37½ per cent. The Jute mills had recently granted increases, and the wages in jute mills were 40 per cent higher than they were in 1917.

* 2 separate columns shown in the Report, merged under column 6 here

A. SATYANARAYANA

Rise and Growth of the Left Movement in Andhra, 1934-1939

IN THE GENERAL logic of the nationalist historiography the anti-imperialist movement led by Congress is regarded as drawing together all the "people" against the British. The "people" is here viewed as an undifferentiated category either in terms of 'classes' or 'communities'. What remains, however, insufficiently stressed is the fact that the broad mass of people had their own interests to safeguard, along with a concern which led them to cooperate with the Congress in the anti-imperialist struggle. Therefore, their actions involved them in a particular relation with the nationalist leadership and frequently they developed conflicts with their programme, strategy and tactics.

In this paper an attempt has been made to study such actions of the groups comprising the peasantry, the agricultural labour and the working class as represented by the left, i.e., the Congress socialists and Communists in Andhra during 1934-39 and their aims, objectives and struggles in the context of a particular political development.

I

The abandonment of the Civil Disobedience Movement had left a "residue of bewilderment" and disillusion among the younger Congress members, an entire generation of whom had entered the political arena during 1930-32 and they were dissatisfied with the Gandhian methods of struggle and leadership. A majority of them also felt that the Gandhi-Irwin Pact did not give adequate protection to the peasantry and other sections who had suffered in the movement. This feeling of "neglect" was the background for the "socialist minded men" meeting (in May 1934) at Gokhale Public Hall, Patna, when the Congress Socialist Party came into being.[1] For them, independence did not merely mean the overthrow of the British, but the liberation of the common masses from economic exploitation and the removal of exploitation through the achievement of socialism.

During this period Andhra witnessed the rise of several revolutionary societies, such as the Hindustan Socialist Republican Party (HSRP) which aimed "to attain *Swaraj* through revolutionary means"[2]. In fact, scores of

these revolutionaries later became socialists who intended to convert Congress into an instrument of struggle from what they regarded as "merely a forum for compromise with imperialism". Meanwhile, in 1934 Amir Haider Khan, "a Moscow trained Bolshevik propagandist", attempted to form the Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of India (CPI) in Madras[1]. He was interned before he could achieve his purpose and in July 1934, the CPI was declared an "unlawful association"[2]. Nevertheless, some of his followers were able to form the Andhra Provincial Communist Party (APCP) with local branches in Madras, Guntur, Krishna and West Godavari. The first secret communist conference was held at Kakinada, where P. Sundarayya[3] was elected as General Secretary. Since the CPI was declared illegal, the provincial party could not carry on open public activities in Andhra. However, the CPI's "United Front" strategy enabled the entire party to join the Andhra Provincial Congress Socialist Party (APCSP). In fact most of the communists in Andhra who were active in the labour organisations (the Labour Protection Leagues) joined the APCSP to use it as a platform for their activities.

After the decision of the All India Congress Socialist Party (AICSP) that provincial parties should be organised, the APCSP was formed in June 1934, by "Congressmen of socialist views"[4]. The main objective of the party according to N.G. Ranga was, "to convert the Congress to socialism". It was also resolved to expand the party organisation throughout Andhra. Accordingly, branches were established at Eluru, Guntur, Gudivada and Bezwada. Initially, the activities of the party were confined to organising various conferences; holding meetings in furtherance of socialist propaganda; and organising tours of national leaders such as Jaya Prakash Narain, Y. Mehrauli, M.R. Masani, S.A. Dange and Jawaharlal Nehru who addressed meetings at several places. During his visit in 1936, Nehru observed: "In Tamilnad I had noticed considerable sympathy with socialistic ideas... Here, in Andhra Desa, this is still more noticeable. The peasantry, as well as the young people, have expressed themselves very definitely in favour of these socialist ideas."[5]. Various resolutions were passed condemning the ban on the CPI; calling on Youth Leagues and socialist organisations to agitate for the release of Amir Haider Khan and other political prisoners; recommending the formation of action committees to propagate anti-imperialist ideals; advocating the adoption of socialistic methods to achieve independence; and appreciating Nehru's attempt to start civil liberties unions. "Anti-imperialist Day", and "Russia Day" were also celebrated. A secret report noted that, "with a view to capturing the socialist parties in Andhra and carrying on their activities through them, P. Sundararama Reddi and his followers in the Telugu districts concentrated their energies organising the party on efficient lines"[6]. The communists were successful in expanding the organisation throughout Andhra and their efforts resulted in the socialists and communists securing more seats in the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee (APCC) and All-India Congress Committee[7] (AICC). Within a short period

mittees of the APCSP. Available evidence also suggests that by the end of 1937, the Executive Committee of the APCSP was dominated by the communists.[8]

Three points need to be noted here. Firstly, from the very beginning the left movement in Andhra was subjected to divergent pulls. People and parties with different ideologies were attempting to control it. Both the communists and non-communists, viz., the Congress socialists wanted to capture the APCSP and impose their leadership on it. Secondly, the growing influence of the communists inside the party caused concern to the right-wing led by V. Jaggam Raju and B. Rangasai. For instance, when the communists decided to organise some district conferences under the presidentship of S.A. Dange, B. Rangasai who was the joint secretary resigned from the party in protest. The socialists did not like the idea of inviting the communists from other parts of India. They openly criticised the Andhra tour of Dange. In 1936, M.R. Masani, the general secretary of the AICSP unsuccessfully tried to bring about reconciliation between the two factions. Thirdly, despite the opposition of the right-wing, the communists successfully maintained their leadership over the agricultural labour association, the peasant organisations, the labour unions and the youth leagues. As we shall see later, the communists indeed dominated the working class organisations in all the Telugu districts of the Madras Presidency. By late 1930s, majority of the district Kisan Sabhas were under their exclusive control.

In order to propagate the ideals of socialism the left organised "Summer Schools of Politics and Economics" and taught Marxism. In 1937, the first "well attended" school was started by Kameswar Rao "a Russian trained communist" at Kothapatam (Guntur), where 'revolutionary socialism' was being taught.[9] The basic function of the schools was to recruit local party cadre and expand the organisation. The government viewed the Kothapatam school as "highly dangerous" and decided "to take drastic action".[10] Therefore, within a short period of time they banned the school and declared it an "illegal and unlawful association". They arrested and imprisoned the members of the school. The banning of the school led to widespread protest meetings throughout Andhra. It was condemned as an "unwarranted attack on civil liberties".[11] Though all left organisations and local Congress committees protested against the ban and arrests, the Congress leadership in Andhra remained silent. In the APCC meeting there was strong opposition (led by T. Prakasam) to the proposal that Congress should defend the accused and it was resolved "to disapprove the action of the school in disobeying the ban". Thus, there was a considerable difference of opinion between the Congress leadership and the left-wing within the party regarding the ban. It signalled the beginning of a confrontation between the 'left' and the Congress right-wing. By disapproving of the school they (the Congress leaders) acted contrary to the Karachi resolution which guaranteed "freedom of speech, freedom of association and combination". However, hostility between the

gress Ministry (1937-39). While releasing the organiser of the school, the Congress government "warned" the socialists that "they will not tolerate violence or class hatred". The Prime Minister, C. Rajagopalacharry declared, "while Government will not interfere with the lawful preaching of any political, social or economic doctrine, they cannot tolerate and will take all steps necessary to prevent the dissemination of class hatred and ideas involving the use of violence..."[12]. The left deplored the negative attitude of the Congress. The Congress socialists wrote thus :

"To suppress the dissemination of ideas whatever be their nature, is to sow the seeds of tyranny. It may, however, be quite legitimate for the government to nip any attempt to translate such ideas into action.... These are obviously dangerous departures from the old accepted definition of free speech, departures which left the freedom of individual without sufficient protection. To deny the citizen the right of speech is to deprive the state of informed criticism".[13]

Nevertheless, the opposition of the Congress Ministry did not stop the growth of summer schools and dissemination of socialist ideas. During 1937-39 a number of such schools had sprung up throughout Andhra. "There was considerable influx of communists from the north of India to these schools",[14] noted the Fortnightly Report. Important communist leaders addressed "failrly well attended" meetings and lectures. The general tendency of the lectures was "to disparage the philosophy and practice of non-violence". The schools intended to direct the students towards active participation in various movements and they were successful in "exciting the sympathies of the students". The influence of Marxian ideas was gradually spreading through these schools. Andhra communists were "supplied with a sufficient quantity of Marx, Engels and Lenins' standard works and also a number of books on Soviet Union".[15] Basic Marxist texts were translated into Telugu and were being circulated. Therefore, the summer schools became "a source of dissemination of prohibited literature". "There are indications that such literature is enjoying a considerable circulation in Andhra districts and there is also a tendency to extend the publication of books of this type",[16] revealed a secret report.

Growing communist influence and socialist propaganda disturbed the Madras government. They were growing increasingly apprehensive of the increasing activities of the "extreme left-wing", viz., the communists. The government of Madras noted that, "socialist thought was noticeably to the fore...Government have now a more difficult problem in the spread of communism.... There is much propaganda going on...".[17] Therefore, they came to the conclusion "that some action had better be taken to show that the government were not prepared to allow free speech...and to give a clear warning that strong measures would be taken against...seditionists....".[18] In an attempt to curb left activity, they began to arrest individuals. During his tour Batliwala, a communist leader, was arrested and convicted. "The arrest of Batliwala has certainly had an excellent effect",[19] remarked the Governor of Madras. It led to innumerable protest meetings, at which resolutions were

passed condemning the Congress ministry. Naturally, the arrests of Batliwala and others infuriated the socialists and increased antagonism between them and the Congress. The sentiment of the left was summed up by the *Nellore Voice*:

"The public fear is that this prosecution... is but a prelude to a policy of suffocating public opinion and denying the right of free speech which ought to be zealously guarded as an elementary right under any civilised government. The public is greatly perturbed at the idea that this action is highly incompatible with the Congress government and with the declared policy of protecting the elementary civil liberties of the people".[18]

Majority of the local Congress communities also expressed their "strong discontent and disapproval" of the action of the government. Thus the Congress leadership had offended "a large section of opinion" that supported them. However, the left determined to carry on "incessant struggle" against the tendency of the Congress to compromise with colonialism and other vested interests. To be able to compel the Congress to attend to the needs of the peasantry, they intensified the peasant movement.

II

The government of Madras observed in 1936 that "agrarian agitation on a considerable scale is now beginning, particularly in the Telugu districts and that the persons promoting the agitations are in many cases known Congressmen of extremist views".[19] The socialists and communists developed a basic interest in the agrarian question against the background of a deep agrarian crisis. The APCSP decided "to devote full attention to peasant work" and it managed to organise peasant associations (Kisan Sabhas) throughout Andhra. Thus a communist paper remarked : "An irressible enthusiasm for organisation caught the peasantry.... Kisan Sabhas sprang up in numerous villages and the district organisations got on their foot. The membership of Andhra Provincial Ryots Association has leapt from 20,000 last year (1937) to 56,000 in 1938."[20] Meanwhile unrest among the peasantry was growing. By 1940 Kisan Sabhas were formed in 11 out of the 12 Andhra districts of the Madras Presidency. Peasant marches had become a popular weapon. As in Kerala,[20] in Madras also peasant processions were evolved as one of the effective techniques of peasant mobilisation for the redressal of grievances. Andhra peasant marches were said to be "bigger than the biggest that ever had happened in England."[21]

The context in which peasant movement expanded was the world economic depression and its aftermath. When the depression set in, the prices slumped. Between 1929-35 a fall of 50-60 per cent was a common phenomenon in Andhra. The fall in the prices obviously was disastrous for the peasantry because it drastically reduced their cash incomes. The burden of normal financial obligation was increased. Peasants' inability to pay revenue and rent regularly resulted in the large-scale accumulation of arrears. Peasant indebtedness also grew. Therefore, the Kisan Sabhas deman-

ded "liquidation of agricultural indebtedness and substantial reduction of rent and revenue".[22]

With the hope and confidence that the Congress ministry would extend its support, the Kisan Sabhas under the left leadership had intensified the anti-zamindari agitation between 1937-39. Consequently, the zamindars had problems in collecting rents. There were instances where the government had to postpone the collection of *peshkush* of certain zamindars "owing to their difficulties in collecting their rents."[23] In Challapalli estate, peasants had begun *satyagraha* in protest against the zamindar's attempt to convert communal lands into *seri* or home-farm.[24] The peasant association objected and did not allow the landlord's agents to occupy land. As the struggle persisted, they frightened and threatened the peasantry. The zamindar also sought the help of police and they compelled the tenants to withdraw the *satyagraha*. The Kisan Sabha efforts to mediate and seek the protection of Congress government failed. In Guntupally and Talasamudram estates, tenant movement was developed over the question of rent reduction. The tenants launched rent struggle and boycotted the cultivation of estate lands. The landlords joined together and threatened the existence of Kisan Sabha and assaulted the local peasant leaders. They fabricated criminal cases against Kisan Sabha leadership. In Talasamudram estate a peasant "was cruelly done to death by the hooligans of the local *sahukars* and landlords".[25] Instead of helping the Kisan Sabha, the Madras government had begun security proceedings against the peasant leaders and demanded that they should furnish security "for good behaviour". The charges against them were that they 'preached socialism to the masses and created class conflict."

The estate holders (in Krishna and Godavari districts) persuaded the government to issue orders under section 144 on tenants against entering certain communal lands and grazing fields. On the other hand, the petitions of tenants against the zamindars' oppression went unheeded.[26] Atrocities on the tenantry were piling up in other estates. The Mokhasadas (Inamdar) of Nelamallur and Kondaparra (Krishna district) attacked and disrupted peasant meetings with lathis and guns and severely assaulted a kisan. A tenant, belonging to another Inam in Vizagapatam was so awfully harassed by the Inamdar for giving evidence in a court against him that "he had to flee for life". Several tenants in the Vizianagaram estate "were tied up with rope to a pillar for one day... for informing the Revenue Minister about certain injustices of the estate administration".[27] Landlords' servants in Gampalagudem estate assaulted a tenant leader for having started the Kisan Sabha. The left leaders deplored the failure of the ministry to intervene on behalf of the tenantry and prevent their persecution by zamindars. They condemned the Congress: "The Chief Minister virtually aiding and abetting the diabolical error of the zamindars."[28]

During the mid-thirties, the left (particularly the communists) successfully developed the agricultural labour movement in Andhra. In his report to the Central Committee of the CPI in 1935 Sundarayya stated that, "Stable unions to which poor peasantry and to some extent middle peasants

look for their interests. . . . have yet to be created. Party is concentrating in rural areas at present more in organising agricultural labour than the peasantry."[29] To begin with; he commenced work in Nellore and formed the "Alaganipadu Agricultural Labour Union". Its objective was "to standardise by means of legislation, daily wages, annual salaries. . . . and to see that a minimum wage is given, facilitating a comfortable life". [30]

Meanwhile, in Guntur J. Ramalingaiah and others also worked out a programme of work for the development of agricultural labour movement. It soon spread to other districts. Several village associations were formed and agricultural workers were mobilised in large numbers. As a result, numerous strikes and marches took place throughout Andhra. During 1935-37 the agricultural labourers launched five strikes only to demand that their wages should be paid with proper and authorised measures. In Nellore, Krishna and West Godavari several thousand labourers went on a strike to demand : "Kind wages should be paid by authorised measures and they should be increased 100 per cent; advances should be interest free; Two hour lunch-break; Twenty paid holidays per annum; Sick leave must be granted and wage cut during the period of ill-health should be abolished; Abolition of *Namu* (compound interest) and current debts".[31] N.G. Ranga remarked : "The strikes had dramactically opened the eyes of the workers of large parts of the district to the possibilities and potentialities of their combined action against the persecution carried on by their employers".[32] The rich peasantry tried to break the solidarity of the rural poor. Occasionally, they "organised beatings of the socialist workers who were responsible for the organisation and tried systematic terorisation".[33] The growing agriculture labour movement also caused resentment among some of the Congressmen and they accused that, "the agricultural labour agitation. . . . owed much to the local politics".[34] It also caused division within the peasant associations and some of its members resigned as a protest against what they called "the latest anti-kisan attitude".

Despite the opposition from the rural rich and the Congress, the left continued the struggles of the rural poor. It was intensified during the Second World War. Between 1939-44, prices of foodgrain and other consumer goods had risen. It affected the rural poor considerably. In order to increase their profits the rural rich, the trade-merchant took to hoarding. The rise in prices of rice and paddy was said to be "largely due to the fact that ryots and merchants continue to hold up their stocks". Government's attempt to control the prices of essential commodities did not benefit the downtrodden. The poorer classes found that they were unable to pay the prices.[35] There was a great deal of discontent among the poor at the high prices of rice and other food stuffs. In desperation they resorted to looting of the rice mills, fire depots and cloth shops. In December 1942 in Guntur district a crowd of 400 people looted four grain shops and carried away rice and paddy. At the same time, in Nellore five cases of looting by "crowds of poor people" was reported.[36] Consequently, there had been a "Marked increase in crime and home-breaking". The Madras Governor remarked thus : "The rising prices are

rather worrying me and there are elements of trouble there. There are grounds for believing that leftist elements were to a considerable extent behind the trouble."[38] Communists were reportedly "trying to forment trouble amongst various labourers". Lootings were said to be "instigated by local communists".[39] Therefore, a number of communist and labour leaders were arrested and agricultural labour unions were banned.

During the Second World War extensive hunger marches were organised by communists throughout Andhra. Thousands of agricultural labourers participated in them and demanded food and work from the rich landlords. The first hunger march was organised in Razole taluk (East Godavari) in May 1939. It was estimated that nearly five thousand labourers took part.[40] In Narsapur taluk (West Godavari) ten thousand labourers from 80 villages marched to the Deputy Collector's office to demand work.[41] In Bhimavaram taluk another ten thousand marched to the government offices. In Krishna district, two to six thousand labourers from six taluks demonstrated before the taluk offices. They demanded employment, house-sites and waste lands for cultivation. In Krishna district, "labour have become restive under communist. . . inspiration. Free doles of grain are being demanded of the ryots. . . ." remarked a government report.[42] From two taluks (Tenali and Repalle) of Guntur district, two to three thousand labourers staged a demonstration in front of the Revenue Divisional Officers. Commenting on the agricultural labour movement the government noted : "There have been hunger marches to the Divisional Officers . . . and demands on well-to-do ryots for rice. . . . They also demand various reforms and amenities. It is known that this movement is instigated by communists. . . . The labourers are tempted with promises of free rice. . . . Naturally, the ryots have become nervous of the possibility of looting".[43]

The government of Madras considered the agricultural labourers' demands "impracticable" and warned them to "beware of being misled by communist agitators." As the movement grew, they resorted to repression. Many of the communist leaders were arrested and prosecuted. However, despite government onslaught and opposition from the rural rich, the communists were able to expand unionisation amongst the agricultural workers. Unlike the Congressmen, the communists were able to develop and sustain the agricultural labour movement over time. The prevailing objective conditions in Andhra countryside, viz., intensive stratification within the peasantry, also helped the growth of the labour movement.

III

Apart from the peasantry and the rural poor, the communists had also organised the working class. In 1932, a working class organisation called "the Young Workers League" was formed. Since the CPI and other communist organisations were banned, the League could not carry on its activities. Therefore, "Labour Protection Leagues" (LPL) were formed, "as a cover for illegal and underground work."[44] Subsequently, local branches were [illegible] in important towns such as Guntur, Tenali [illegible]

Vijayawada. Almost all the members of the leagues joined the APCSP and worked through it. The initial activities of the Leagues were confined to celebrating "Labour Day", "anti-imperialist Day", "Russian Revolution Day" etc. They condemned the ban on the CPI and urged the release of communists. Propaganda meetings were organised to stimulate interest among the workers and induce them to join the unions. They also held study circles and conducted night schools. During 1935-37 the Guntur LPL was able to form unions among the press workers, jute mill workers and *jutka* drivers. The Nellore LPL was formed "to safeguard the rights of workers and the poor and to educate the workers about Indian Trade Union Movement and problems of world workers". Meanwhile, the Vijayawada LPL organised the strike of press workers and revived the activities of other unions. It led a "Black flag" demonstration during the visit of the Congress president "to expose the reactionary role of the Congress".

Thus in Andhra the left was active and built up well knit organisations for the working class. The Governor of Madras remarked : "In Andhra communists had been trying to make trouble by utilizing any dispute between the workers and their employers....Labour disputes are increasing and the local socialists are taking a keen interest in it. At some of their meetings, the socialists indulged in objectionable and mischievous speeches."[11] The left appealed to the working class to follow the example of Russia and preserve the sanctity and integrity of the Red flag and to establish a "workers *raj*" on the model of Russia, "even if it involved the shedding of the last drop of the blood of the workers." They criticised the Congress leadership for its reformist programme and explained to the working class that they could not achieve their emancipation under the leadership of the Congress. Therefore they urged them "to organise themselves into a political party and devise programmes to crush capitalists and establish their rule."[12] To propagate Marxist ideals, communist literature was published; communists also distributed leaflets and the "Karmika Bhajanavali", comprising of Telugu songs composed in popular form describing the hardship of workers and exhorting them to organise themselves into unions and fight for their rights.

The spread of the trade union movement with a radical programme and left-wing leadership caused concern to the government. Therefore, they resorted to repressive measures. Important labour leaders and communists were arrested and prosecuted. Communist literature was seized. The government was keen that "communism should be nipped in the bud", because it was "a real danger". They found that the existing coercive powers were inadequate to deal with the communists and wrote to the Government of India recommending special legislation. The government of Madras informed the Centre thus :

"No judicial action has been possible inasmuch as their activities are subterranean and leave no room for prosecution.... This method of attack is most dangerous and effective and the only way to check the menace...would be to pass the proposed bill... It seems that measures should be devised now to prevent the deliberate creation of an atmosphere of mass discontent

instead of waiting until the...discontent confronts the government with a hard and fast situation."[16]

Nevertheless, the left continued its work among the working class and it was intensified during the Congress government (1937-39). In February, 1938, the workers of Indian Leaf Tobacco Development Company (ILTDC), Chirala (Guntur) went on a protest strike against the refusal of the management to recognise the labour union. When the management dismissed two workers, the rest of the workers refused to work. Consequently, the management declared a lock out. The labour union protested and observed peaceful picketing. The Congress ministry intervened but it was of no use. Police was sent to disrupt the strike and help the management to reopen the factory. They resorted to lathi charge and fired on the striking workers. As a result, three of them were killed. The government enquiry committee justified the firing as "self defence", while the non-official Congress committee condemned it. Protest meetings and large demonstrations were held throughout Andhra and a "Chirala Firing Day" was observed."[17] Rajagopalachary supported the government action and blamed the workers for having "caused trouble".[18]

Another big strike began in the Chittivalasa Jute Mills to protest against labour retrenchment. The entire workers of the mill participated in the strike. The retrenchment was in connection with the general curtailment of production decided by the Indian Jute Mills Association. Following the management's decision to dismiss a weaver, 2000 workers went on a "stay-in-strike". Armed police was sent "to clear the mill premises". The labour union resisted and continued the strike. The police fired four shots and killed a worker.[19] Instead of sympathising with the strikers, the Congress government expressed "strongest disapproval of the workers' conduct in occupying the premises and indulging in a stay-in-strike as a weapon for redressal of labour grievances." The left leadership criticised the negative attitude of the ministry thus:

"For the workers of Madras whether in Chittivalasa or Chirala, the situation is becoming unbearable. The Madras government enunciated a policy of settling industrial disputes internally. But this wish remained only on paper. In almost every industrial dispute the police and bureaucracy have butted in with bullets, playing havoc with the lives.... In almost every instance the Congress ministry either exonerated the bureaucracy or submitted...to the dictats of the bosses."[20]

Fibre and Salt Workers at Kakinada began a strike to demand more wages. The Labour Commissioner of Madras declared that "they were paid unduly low rates of wages and should be raised." Yet the employers refused to comply with his recommendations. Protest meetings were held by the labour union, where "intemperate speeches" were made and "..s the workers appeared to be getting out of control an order... was passed prohibiting all meetings, processions and demonstration."[21] The leaders of the union were arrested. Other local labour unions went on a sympathetic strike. Meanwhile, workers of the Kakinada Boat and Steamer Works launched a strike demand-

ing higher wages and security of employment. When the management brought outside workers, the striking workers successfully persuaded them not to work. The strike was supported by the local Congress committee, student unions and other workers' unions. The Vizag Port and Harbour workers expressed solidarity and sympathy with their fellow workers at Kakinada.

The growth and strengthening of the labour unions became a serious problem for the Madras government. It was also an embarrassment to the Congress. They regretted the continued "labour trouble". Although they promised workers' right to strike for wages, the ministry took a hostile attitude. The Congress government thus authorised prosecution "for stirring up strike between different classes" and instituted proceedings against the left-wing agitators. The Governor of Madras observed : "The general labour situation is causing the ministry a great deal of anxiety and they are well aware that great deal of the propaganda...is not merely anti-employer but also very definitely anti-ministry." Further,

"The ministers are very annoyed...and they are in no way supporting the strikes.... Communist influence is undoubtedly behind these disturbances and it must be said that Ministers are . . . . losing control of labour. The premier is coming round to the view that it is time some action was taken against communists., and I shall not be at all surprised to see him agreeing to some arrests... ."

The working class movement was intensified during the Second World War. The labour unions had taken advantage of the rise in prices and demanding higher wages. The Chittivalasa Jute Mill workers went on a strike demanding higher wages. It led to large scale internments of communists under the Defence of India Rules (DIR).

It is clear from the above discussion that the socialists and communists were very active in mobilising the hitherto neglected sections of the mass of the people by Congress. Undoubtedly the communists had played an important role in the formation and growth of working class movement. The left as a whole had a considerable base within the working class and launched impressive strike movements. The communists were able to utilise the strikes to extend their influence over the working class, whom they intended to educate with Marxist ideology. Interestingly, they had also penetrated into and organised the backward sections of the exploited class such as the rice mill workers, sweepers, the *jutka* and cart drivers.

To conclude, we have tried to present a comprehensive account of the left movement in Andhra and analyse the manner in which it interacted with the dominant Congress leadership. In this paper an attempt has also been made to discuss the origin and growth of left movement in a particular political context, i.e., the period of the "United Front". During this period all the anti-imperialist forces represented by different political parties fought unitedly against the British and their supporters. The abrupt ending of Civil Disobedience movement in Andhra resulted in the formation of revo-

lutionary terrorist organisation (the HSRP). Though the terrorist movement was sporadic and short lived, it did provide initial recruits to the left movement. Meanwhile, some of the young radical Congressmen like Sundarayya joined the Communist Party. He was mainly responsible for the spread of communism in Andhra. As a matter of fact, unlike in other parts of India (Bombay, Bengal, Uttar Pradesh etc.) communism came to Andhra only in mid-1930s. Although the Communist Party was formed in Andhra in 1934, it could not work among the masses as it was declared an "unlawful association". However, the formation of APCSP (in June, 1934) enabled the handful of Andhra communists to join in it and carry on their activities among the workers and peasants and act as a strong left-wing of the Congress.

During 1934-39, the socialists and communists worked collectively to build workers and peasant associations throughout Andhra. Within a short period, leftist influence in the Congress began to grow steadily. Consequently, they were able to hold posts at the district, provincial and All-India Congress committees. By the end of 1939 communist influence was felt clearly among the working class and youth. Especially on the trade union front the communists in Andhra made rapid progress within a very short period of time. While till 1934 communist influence among working class was negligible, by the end of 1938 they were able to dominate various labour unions. Likewise, the communists were aware of the great potential of peasant demands such as moratorium on loans, revenue and rent demand, tenancy legislation and so on, in uniting the entire peasantry in an anti-imperialist united front. They were also able to single out and utilise other immediate demands of the peasantry to integrate them into political activity. Undoubtedly, in the context of the convergence of various left forces in the late 1930s, i.e., with the formation of working class and peasant associations, agricultural labour unions, youth leagues and students unions and the increasing influence of Congress socialists the communists played an important role in giving the anti-landlord, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle a distinct leftward orientation. Thus it could be seen that the communists in a brief period made a remarkable impact on the political scene in Andhra. Starting from almost nothing in 1934 they could, by the end of 1939, claim substantial influence among the working class, the peasantry and the youth.

However, the dominant Congress leadership was growing apprehensive of the increasing penetration of the trade unions, Kisan Sabhas and Youth Leagues by the communists. Peasant satyagrahas at Kalipatam and Munagala and working class strikes at Chirala and Chittivalasa are a case in point. The Congress leadership, in fact, did not appreciate the crucial role played by the left in general and the communists in particular, in rousing the peasantry and working class to organised political action. In the name of maintaining "class harmony" the Congress discouraged the anti-landlord and anti-capitalist struggles. The Congress ministry freely and liberally resorted to repressive measures to control the communist activity. Therefore, a conflict developed

trated the efforts of the communists to build an effective anti-imperialist united front, the latter were able to consolidate workers and peasant organisations by radicalising and winning over the advanced sections of Congress Socialists towards them. Thus by the end of 1930, the Communist Party was able to mobilise various sections of the Andhra society against the colonial state. That is to say, during the Second World War, the communists played an active role in integrating different sections of people into the vortex of the anti-imperialist movement.

Andhra in this paper denotes the following Telugu speaking districts of the erstwhile Madras Presidency: Nellore, Guntur, Krishna, West Godavari, East Godavari and Vizagapatam

1 . L.P. Sinha, *The Left-wing in India, 1919-47,* Muzaffarnagar, 1965, pp 304-5.

2 . Sarojini Regani, *Highlights of the Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh,* Hyderabad, 1972, pp 137-39.

3 . *Selections from Secret Files,* Andhra Pradesh State Archives, Hyderabad, p. 2576. (Hereafter referred to as Selections); M. Venkatarangaiah, *Freedom Movement in Andhra,* Vol IV, Hyderabad, 1965, p. 646.

4 . *Fortnightly Reports,* Madras, 2nd half of June, 1934. Home pol. (NAI). (Hereafter F.R.)

5 . M. Venkatarangaiah, *op. cit.,* p. 668.

6 . *Ibid.,* p. 666.

7 . In 1936, three socialists were elected to the AICC and 23 to the APCC and in 1937, their strength went upto 7 and 47 respectively.

8 . *Governor's Situation Report,* 2nd half of November, 1937. LPJ/5/197, India Office Library London. (Hereafter Governor's Report). In 1934 there were only 4 communists in the working committee of the APCSP, but by 1937 their strength increased to 11 out of 17.

9 . *Selections* pp 4-5.

10 . *Governor's Report,* 2nd half of April, 1937, LPJ/5/197.

11 . *Congress Socialist,* 5 June, 1937.

12 . Cited in *Congress Socialist,* 14 August, 1937.

13 . *Ibid.*

14 . *F.R.* 1st half of June, 1938.

15 . Report from the Secretary of the Madras Provincial Committee of the CPI to Central Committee, (no date) in *Selections* p. 2596.

16 . *F.R.* 2nd half of June, 1938.

17 . *Selections* p.4.

18 . *Governor's Report,* 2nd half of September, 1937, LPJ/5/197.

18a. *Governor's Report,* 1st half of October, 1937, LPJ/5/197, [illegible] MSS Eur F125/[illegible]

19 . *Congress Socialist*, 9 October, 1937.

19a. M. Venkatarangaiah, Freedom... *op. cit.*, p. 574.

20 . *National Front*, 24 April, 1938.

20a. Prakash Karat, "Organised Struggles of Malabar Peasantry, 1934-1940", in *Social Scientist*, Vol. 5, No. 6, 1972. pp 4-5.

21 . *National Front*, 24 April, 1938.

22 . *Selections*... p. 2605.

23 . *Governor's Report*, 1st half of March, 1938, LPJ/5/198.

24 . *Andhra Patrika*, 3 November, 1937.

25 . *National Front*, 19 March, 1939.

26 . *National Front*, 4 September 1938 and 13 November, 1938.

27 . *National Front*, 4 September, 1938,

28 . *Ibid.*

29 . *Selections* p. 2595

30 . *Ibid.*, p. 2584.

31 . *Zamin Ryot*, 8 July, 1937.

32 . N.G. Ranga, Kisan... *op cit.*, p. 17.

33 . *National Front*, 24 April, 1938.

34 . N.G. Ranga, Kisan, *Op. cit.*, p. 16.

35 *Communist*, November, 1940.

36 *Governor's Report*, 1st half of December, 1942, LPJ/5/205.

37 . *Ibid*

38 . *Ibid.*

39 . *Communist*, November, 1940, p. 12.

40 . *Ibid Governor's Report*, 2nd half of September, 1940. LPJ/5/203.

41 . *Ibid.*

42 . *Governor's Report*, 1st half of October, 1940, LPJ/5/203.

43 *Selections*, p. 2578.

44 . *Governor's Report*, 2nd half of September, 1937, LPJ/5/197.

45 . *Selections*, p. 2593.

46 . *Ibid.*, p. 2581.

47 . *Andhra Patrika*, 17 February, 1938.

48 . *Governor's Report*, 2nd March, 1938. LPJ/5/198.

49 . *Governor's Report*, 1st half of February, 1939. LPJ/5/200.

50 . *New Age*, March-April, 1939.

51 . *Governor's Report*, 1st half of April, 1939. LPJ/5/200.

52 . *National Front*, 19 February, 1934.

53 . *Governor's Report*, 1st half of March, 1938, LPJ/5/198.

54 . "The Communist activities during the anti-war agitation were wide-spread... There was labour unrest throughout the Presidency. Communist party played a very dominant part in the strikes and labour disputes. Various labour unions were controlled by them". *Selections*, p. 716.

Academic Marxism Today

DIPTENDRA BANERJEE (ed.). MARXIAN THEORY AND THE THIRD WORLD, Sage Publications, pp. 325 Rs. 195.00.

THIS VOLUME is a selection from papers presented at the three-day Karl Marx Centennial International Seminar held at Burdwan University in 1983. The most important contribution of this book is that it shows one how the Marxist approach is constantly conquering new fields, even in the academic sphere, especially in anthropology and development studies, so long the bastion of imperialist ideology.

This should not surprise us. It is a reflection of the success of the national liberation movements since the end of World War II and the phenomenal transformations achieved by those countries which advanced from national liberation to socialism under various class-alliances led by working class parties. However, this does not mean that all those academics who are part and parcel of this trend are actually conscious of this.

For example, Cyril Levitt, in a paper entitled : *Marx's Anthropology and the Problems of Evolutionism*, speaks of "the failure of socialist movements in the twentieth century"[1] when it is precisely in this century that the first socialist state, the USSR, was born; it survived a protracted civil war, imperialist invasions and went on to become the main force to defeat world fascism in 1945; it is in this century too that a powerful socialist camp is astride the world, from the Western Atlantic outpost of Cuba to China in the Eastern Pacific, and the world Empires have all crumbled away before the tide of national liberation which could never have survived without the triumph of socialism on a world scale. Still, unaware though Anglo-Saxon academics may be of these historic transformations, their work has had to come to terms with the revolutionary thinker who foretold the collapse of world capitalism and its replacement by socialism : Karl Marx.

The most significant contribution of this volume is to bury the old myths about Marx being Eurocentric, an apologist of colonial rule, an economic determinist, or that he was, in fact, not serious about the mapping out of a distinct path of development for Asiatic and African nationalities and peoples as his main concern was to score a point over an American economist, Carey. In fact, only Heinz Lubasz's paper : *Marx's Concept of the Asiatic Mode of Production : A Genetic Analysis,* still echoes many of these themes and comes to the conclusion that the Asiatic Mode "tells us little of value about Asia or, by extension, the rest of the non-European world."[2] It is

obviously not in keeping with the other contributions in general, and one wonders why it is included in this selection at all.

Also, it would appear that some of the academic tilting that the authors indulge in, as in Diptendra Banerji's paper entitled : *In Search of a Theory of Pre-capitalist Modes of Production,* which makes a point of attacking "the theoretical and methodological wisdom of those fawning Marxist expositions which seek to explain the life-style and dynamics of a pre-capitalist mode of production via an exclusively economic process of surplus-appropriation comparable... to that in the CMP" (Capitalist Mode of Producaion)[3], is a little quixotic. In fact, such a critique of developmental theorists like Rostow, who tries to impose a far more rigid and Eurocentric model on all 'Third World' countries than any Marxist, is really called for but overlooked. And Tom Kemp's paper that touches this aspect is tucked away at the end of the book.

On the other hand, to put the record straight, it is to the credit of the Marxist movement that it adopted a Programme on 7 November 1964, which states : "Capitalist development in India, however, is not of the type which took place in Western Europe and other advanced capitalist countries.... The present Indian society, therefore is a peculiar combination of monopoly capitalist domination with caste, communal and tribal institutions. It has fallen to the lot of the working class and its party to unite all the progressive forces interested in destroying the precapitalist society and so to consolidate the revolutionary forces within it as to facilitate the most rapid completion of the democratic revolution and preparation of the ground for transition to socialism."[4] In effect, what the Marxists had digested and put down in programmatic form as far back as 1964 is what the Marxians have reflected theoretically in 1985; and that too, in a university in a state governed by a Left Front Government whose dynamics the Marxist movement of India has evolved and which it runs to this day.

The two papers that best reflect the actual dialogue between the problematic of revolution and of academic theory are Miomir Jaksic's *Marx's Theory of Modes of Production : Problems of Colonialism and Underdevelopment,* and Harold Wolpe's *The Articulation of Modes and Forms of Production.*

Jaksic points out, first and foremost, that Marx never posited a unilinear model of development, but rather, "as in the case of geological formations, historical formations constitute a whole series of primary, secondary and tertiary types."[5] Or again, as in *Capital,* where he states : "The history of this expropriation assumes different aspects in different countries, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession and at different epochs."[6]

Secondly, he specifically notes Marx's criticism of mechanical attempts to impose the West European scheme on all societies, especially with reference to Mikhailovsky, who "feels he absolutely must metamorphose my historical sketch of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into a historico-philosophical theory of the general path every people is fated to [illegible] whatever the historical circumstances in which [illegible]

With regard to India, Marx is even more specific in his criticism of Kovalevsky's *Obscinnoe Zemlevadenie*, for describing the Indian land-holding system as 'feudal.' Nor is his criticism mere economic determinism, as we see from Banerji's paraphrase of it : "First, he rebukes the Russian sociologist for not seeing that land in India....is not as 'noble' in character as not to be alienated to commoners, while in the FMP (Feudal Mode of Production) of the West it is 'the poetry of the soil'...which makes it too prized to be alienated to the common people who worked it. Marx then adds that serfdom, 'an important element in feudalism,' performs no crucial role in India; that the existence of the *ikta* or benefice system (grants for military service) in India by no means proves that medieval Indian society is feudal, for such things can be found in ancient Rome as well and Roman society surely is not feudal, that the same is also the case with the 'sale of offices' which, in fact, is not found everywhere in India; that the picture of administration of justice, especially in Civil Law, in Mughal India is totally different from that in the feudal system in Europe, where the superior lord could not enter the jurisdictional domain of his vassal; that 'a great source' of European feudalism is obstructed in India, for political power here is not subject to 'division among the sons;' that the role of European feudal nobility as protectors of free and unfree peasants is almost insignificant in India; that the imposition of the Islamic *Kharadj* by the Muslim rulers in India makes Indian property as little feudal as the *impot foncier* (land tax) makes the French landed property feudal."[8]

Marx's informed and precise objections to describing pre-capitalist Indian society as feudal is highlighted again when he calls James Budd Phear, the author of *The Aryan Village* an "ass" for describing *jajmani* relations as "feudal", and notes that La Touche's *Settlement Report of Ajmere and Mhairwarra* "Falsified the facts by the phraseology borrowed from feudal Europe.....In Europe, in contradistinction to the East, in place of the produce tribute was substituted a dominion over the soil—the cultivators being turned out of their land and reduced to the condition of serfs or labourers. In the East, under the village system, the people practically governed themselves".[9]

These very detailed critical statements over the years, as well as the specific mention of how "Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production can be designated progressive stages of the economic formation of society,"[10] show that Marx neither ignored nor took the problem of the concrete forms of development of non-European societies lightly. On the contrary, he appears to have become more convinced of the need to study the concrete reality of their social transformations in his later work, as he saw them as distinct from those that had developed the capitalist mode of production in western Europe.

As regards Asiatic society, he was much more precise : "Usury has a revolutionary effect on pre-capitalist modes of production insofar as it destroys and dissolves the forms of ownership which provide a firm basis for the articulation of political life and whose constant reproduction in the same

while without leading to anything more than economic decay and political corruption. It is only when other conditions for the capitalist mode of production are present that usury appears as one of the means of formation of this new mode of production."[1] Thus both pre-capitalist society in Asia as well as its process of transition, neither of these was envisaged in Eurocentric terms by Marx. As such, his reflections on the Asiatic Mode cannot be taken as either haphazard or extrinsic to the theory of the development of capitalism, and today, of socialism.

In this respect, the conclusion of Jaksic points out how "Marx's theory of modes of production is universal yet broad enough to encompass very different processes—the ones in western Europe which were developed on the foundations of capitalism, and those in the East that emerged on the basis of the Asiatic mode of production. Our conclusion is, therefore, that the theory of modes of production makes possible an understanding of development and underdevelopment; and that it is not necessary to abandon the theory of modes of production in order to understand and explain the phenomenon of underdevelopment and replace it by theories of 'unequal exchange,' 'dependency' or 'capitalist world economy.'

"In this respect, in the economic domain, the theory of modes of production could present the basis of autocthonous 'political economies' of particular regions within the general canvas of political economy that explains the principles of social reproduction. In the domain of political theory, it makes possible the understanding of socialism as a world-process that is expressed in a variety of differing paths. In the domain of philosophy and sociology, the theory of modes of production makes possible the understanding of the development of society, the emergence of private property, class and state, in the concrete conditions of history."[12]

Before this task can be properly taken up, it is necessary to deal with certain radical and liberal-bourgeois theorists (basically of the neo-Trotskyite persuasion) as they bedevil the proper theoretical development of the study of 'Third World' societies with concepts like the 'Colonial' mode of production and "the development of underdevelopment" which have nothing in common with Marxist theorisation and have, at best, a merely descriptive status in terms of empirical reality.

The basic problem is that in the 'Third World' while capitalism has imposed itself on pre-capitalist socio-economic formations, it has not succeeded in overthrowing them wholly, and has even preserved them and altered them according to its needs. How are we to analyse this process?

Marx saw it as a dual process, both destructive and regenerative. And perhaps the best analysis of this is in his writings on Colonial rule in India in 1853, where he states : "The historic pages of their rule in India report hardly anything beyond that destruction. The work of regeneration hardly transpires through a heap of ruins. Nevertheless it has begun."[13] Then he goes on to qualify his statement by unequivocally stating that "all the English bourgeoisie may be forced to do will neither emancipate nor materially [illegible]

the development of the productive powers, *but on their appropriation by the people.*"[14]

This clearly shows that Marx's assessment of colonialism was realistic. He did not consider it progressive as is often stated by the misinformed and by those who have made misinformation their profession, all he has stated is that "modern industry, resulting from the railway system, will dissolve the hereditary divisions of labour, upon which rest the Indian castes, those decisive impediments to Indian progress and Indian power."[15] The capacity of the dissolvent to unleash progress is obviously dependent on the classes controlling the state.

Marx is absolutely clear that modes of production coexist and interact in a variety of ways. Describing the transition from feudalism to capitalism (about which even the most virulent detractors of Marx admit that he knew more than most), he clearly states : "The transition from the feudal mode of production takes place in two different ways. The producer may become a merchant and capitalist in contrast to the agricultural subsistence economy and to the guild-found handicraft of the medieval urban industry. This is the really revolutionary way. Alternatively, however, the merchant may take direct control of production himself. But however frequently this occurs as a historical transition....it cannot bring about the overthrow of the old mode of production by itself, but rather preserves and retains it as its own precondition."[16]

From this position, Jaksic concludes that "the outcome is a peculiar coexistence of the old and the new modes of production, which may assume the following forms : the intrusion of the new and the decaying of the old mode of production; relations without change and the growing together of the old and the new mode of production"[17]—a situation of stagnation and crisis. Moreover, the words "without change" should be taken in relation to the context of a revolutionary transformation. This in essence, sums up the Marxist position on the process of the *articulation* of one mode by another.

The neo-Troskyites, overstressing the developmental capacity of capitalism, claim that this outlook is empiricist and dualist. This and other objections to the Marxist position are dealt with by Harold Wolpe, who notes that for the neo-Trotskyite critics of Marxism, "the concept of dualism is left undefined; the term is simply flourished. The reason for this lies, no doubt, in the assumption that the concepts of dualism and pluralism, as these were employed in non-Marxist literature, have long since been demolished. All that is then required is to assert that articulation theory is dualist theory in a Marxist disguise and hence stands already demolished. Secondly, the counterpart of the neglect to investigate properly the concept of dualism is the failure to examine either the specific elaborations of articulation theory or the empirical accounts generated by it, particularly insofar as these are pertinent to the accusation of dualism. Instead, it is simply asserted that articulation theory and analysis necessarily import a dualistic conception of the

Dualism is a specific concept, as Wolpe points out according to which, "some societies (particularly in the non-European world) are not characterized by a single economy, but by two economic sectors, one 'advanced' and the other 'backward.' These sectors operate autonomously of one another-autonomously in the sense that, even where a commodity or labour market or state is seen to connect the two sectors, nonetheless, the economic processes within each sector are conceived of as occurring quite independently of the other sector....A similar dualism (now referred to as pluralism) is said to exist at the non-economic level through a plurality of more or less autonomous social, political and cultural institutions."[19]

Wolpe goes on to point out that "In the first place, articulation theory does not, of course, work with the evolutionist and structural functionalist concepts of modernisation theory. It is concerned not with the 'modern' and 'backward' or 'traditional' sectors, but with the analysis of the processes of the capitalist mode of production and its articulation with other, non-capitalist modes....The concepts of mode of production function not to produce typologies, but as the means for analysis of social processes and, particularly in the case of capitalism and imperialism, the way in which these processes generate relations between different modes of production."

"Secondly...nowhere in the literature of articulation is the view advanced that the capitalist mode of production and the non-capitalist modes articulate but, nevertheless, function autonomously of one another. To the contrary, the central proposition of articulation theory is that the relation of articulation...is a relation of transformation of the modes of production implicated in the relationship."[20]

On the contrary, if we look at an Indian version of neo-Trotskyist analysis, albeit a crude one, we find a curious phenomenon. While denying past survivals, colonialism is distinguished *structurally* from capitalism and the position is stated as follows : "the political economy of growth in India had to start from....the colonial 'model', and not the tradition-modernization model."[1] Here clearly, while positing the integration of colonial development with world capitalism, the problem of explaining its backwardness or 'underdevelopment' remains, so a certain autonomy develops, and we are told "colonialism brought about momentous social and economic transformation during which centuries-old relationships and institutions were dissolved and replaced by new relationships and institutions (how different is Marx's analysis presented above ! *"In the realm of agriculture too, new agrarian relations and class-structure came into being.....A new agrarian structure was born that was neither traditional or feudal nor capitalist."* ' Again, describing 'semi-feudalism,' he states "the new agrarian structure that was evolved to suit the needs of colonialism....was undoubtedly semi-feudal but it was nevertheless new."[2] And finally to a point where the author admits "World capitalism is a single system and colonialism is a basic constituent of this system. Yet colonialism has distinct characteristics of its own. We have therefore to view the same system of imperialism-colonialism in the form of *two separate entities, one in the colony and the other in the metropolis*."[21] Thus, while contending against the

imagined dualism of Marxist analysis, the neo-Trotskyite position actually ends up by not only being dualist, but creating a new tyoplogical colonial 'model'—and under this guise, totally whitewashing the reactionary character of colonialism. There is, in fact, nothing in common between such theories and Marxism, whose position has been spelt out above.

Wolpe goes on to show how other theoreticians of this school go as far as stating "that the single major theoretical impediment to the effective analysis of actual production in the Third World is the concept of a 'mode' of production,' on the one hand, and on the other "to replicate the dualism of bourgeois social theory"." This approach may consider itself illuminating, but it is not Marxist; and Wolpe's critique of it is a necessary one.

Of the three papers supposed to deal with the concrete aspects of the Asiatic Mode of Production, Lubasz only attempts to show how Marx, "since his concern was not with Asia but with the remote antecedents of the capitalist mode of production," did not spend much effort on it or in detailing its dynamics. But Banerji, in his contribution, *Marx and the 'Original' Form of India's Village Community*, gives a different picture. He shows how the Asiatic village and its development constantly occupied the mind of Marx, and stresses the fact that "materials of the 1879-82 period are particularly important, for they throw ample light on how Marx's mind had been working towards the last years of his life in the matter, among others, of the archetypical form of the Indian/Asiatic village community and its gradual evolution into the full-blown form of the community in post-primitive, civil-political society."

In fact, almost unwittingly, even Lubasz shows how central Marx's Asiatic researches were in order to identify the distinctive preconditions for the historical specificity of a capitalist category. "Here that category is surplus profit. Marx needed to account in terms of *his* theory for the fact that part of the capitalist farmer's profit went to the landowner. Plainly the landowner himself was not deriving a profit from the process of capitalist production, since it was the capitalist farmer's capital and not the landowner's which performed capital's mediating role in bringing labour and the conditions of labour together. And Marx was dissatisifed with the Ricardian theory. In due course he found the answer to the problem in the concept of the more or less forcible extraction of a surplus from the producing population. All land rent is the product of surplus labour and always has been. The distinctively capitalist mode of appropriating this surplus is the covert appropriation of surplus value. The pre-capitalist mode of appropriating it is the overt appropriation of surplus product and/or of surplus labour in the form of services."" In Asia, however, where there is no appropriator other than the landlord-state, rent and tax coincide, and in fact tax is the most primitive form of ground-rent. Thus, the Asiatic Mode in Marx is connected with the question of the agrarian revolution directly, and also with the alliance of classes necessary to accomplish it. As such, it cannot be wished away from a Marxist standpoint.

Some attempt is made by Banerji to stress the need for studying the

village communities as they have evolved over time, and he shows that Marx was in fact progressing in that direction. But it is a pity he does not take the cue and evaluate the vast amount of work done by anthropologists on the Indian village. Nor does he appear to be familiar with P. Sundarayya's study on the *Class Differentiation of the Peasantry : Results of Rural Surveys in Andhra Pradesh,* [40] which should be concretely assessed within the context of the Indian National Movement, the Telengana and other peasant uprisings and upsurges, culminating in the land reforms of a bourgeois-landlord government. Similarly, Harbans Mukhia in a paper entitled *Marx on Pre-Colonial India : An Evaluation*, admits the importance of the Marxist approach for coming to the correct conclusion that "The control over labour was exercised through the operation of the caste system which excluded the menial castes from the right to own and cultivate land for themselves, and this in the context of enormous land abundance. It was thus that the availability of agricultural labour was determined by social laws and customs in a specific Indian form of non-economic coercion."[41] However, here again, this can hardly be called an evaluation without taking up an analysis of the attempts at forging class alliances, both by the Indian National Congress and the Communist-led Kisan Sabhas, and their successes or failures during the National Movement and since independence. Marxism, fortunately, does not permit facile evaluations, and Mukhia's paper makes too tentative a start indeed to be called an 'evaluation.'

The paper of Hamza Alavi, *Class and State in Pakistan,* is of interest precisely because it raises the issue of the nature of the State, its control by the ruling class or classes and the use of despotism to keep it going (in this case, military dictatorship), all questions raised by Marx in his study of the Asiatic Mode of Production. If anywhere his theory is relevant in studying the historical transformation of the Asiatic Mode, it is Pakistan, where irrigation is essential to agriculture, where the bureaucracy and army largely living on foreign pay-offs, are relatively independent of the base, and where for much of the time since 1947 there has been despotic rule coupled with an attempt at "basic democracy" at the ground level for the local community.

However, using as he does, the framework of "peripheral capitalism" (a variant of the dualist neo-Trotskyite theory criticised above), he ignores all the rich possibilities of studying the survival of pre-capitalist relations (ossified by the conscious colonial policy of buttressing the landed classes in Punjab and of integrating them in the imperial army as "martial races") under British rule, the success of this policy right up to 1947 and beyond, based on imperialist-bureaucratic and landlord collaboration, all within the frame-work of the specificities outlined above.

Starting from the position that: "the Pakistan State was ruled by peripheral capitalism and its structural imperative," he states that while "the State even sponsored the creation and growth of the bourgeoisie," "to describe the latter as the ruling class would be to do violence to reality."[42]

Again he notes that "The metropolitan bourgeoisie wields a big clout. But in its dealings with the post-colonial state, it has to manipulate as well as

pressurize and threaten; and it has to bribe its way, like the indigenous classes, to get what it wants." In fact, it had to do that under colonialism (especially in the years after 1857) and more so with the advent of neo-colonialism after World War II, which Alavi prefers to see as "peripheral capitalism," which again leads him to conclude : "Therefore, while recognising the pervasive power and influence of the metropolitan bourgeoisie, we cannot see any justification in designating it as the 'ruling class.' "[43] Of the landlords too, he claims that "one can hardly maintain that they indeed were the 'ruling class.' "[44]

He realises that his analysis has placed him in a ridiculous position. He asks : "what can we make of the stage we have reached so far in our argument, having concluded that none of the three dominant classes can properly be designated as the ruling class ? Does that mean, therefore, that we abandon the conception of a class-basis of political power and the State, in favour of some notion of a free floating, autonomous State with its own independent logic and 'will', free from societal moorings ?"[45]

Instead, it is a state without a ruling class, but with a "structural imperative", performing the function of a Holy Ghost. In fact, "the guardians of the classes in order to formulate policies." They would be very bad representatives of their class-interest if they did. But then, these men do extraordinary things : "They engage in calculations of policy alternative independently of the expressed wishes of dominant classes." However, a few independently of the expressed wishes of dominant calsses." However, a few paragraphs down, we are informed that this 'independence' is very limited indeed, for "the question of a revolutionary ideology and rupture with peripheral capitalism is another matter altogether" ![46] Then why this new theory to describe a crisis-ridden state dominated by more than one class ?

This perspective certainly does one thing more than merely overstressing capitalist development in the 'Third World'. It obscures the reactionary role of imperialism in 'post colonial' times just as Bipan Chandra obscured the reactionary role of colonialism in dealing with colonial India. With regard to the Ayub Khan coup of 1958, he states, "it would be a mistake, however, to jump to the conclusion that either the Generals, or for that matter, the US (so often the *deux ex machine* (sic !) brought in to explain military coups d'etat) favoured a military regime at the time in Pakistan."[47] The same absence of US presence is notable in his description of events leading up to the take-over by Zia-ul-Haq from Bhutto, when he says : "In 1977, the army played a not so insignificant role in aligning forces against Bhutto and the PPP that led to their overthrow-and eventually Bhutto's execution. But it had to build up its political capital once again, by stages, before General Zia-ul-Haq could actually take over. Several months had to pass between the start of the well-prepared and orchestrated 'popular' movement against Bhutto and the eventual take-over by the army, and that too was to be for a period of three months, in the first, with a promise to hold fresh elections."[48] And this too, at a period when "unlike previous military regimes, it found itself totally bereft of legitimacy and relied on brutal repression to terrorise the people."

Obviously, without powerful support, such an 'independenct', both isolated and illegitimate, is hard to explain and we are informed, "Nonetheless, it had to look for a new source of legitimacy. This it decided to build on the basis of a self assumed mission to build an Islamic economy and Islamic polity in Pakistan."[9] There is nothing new in the ploy whose historical origins take it back to the British policy of 'Divide and Rule' and the formation of the Muslim League in 1906; but it is curious that Alavi should use this flimsy excuse as a proof of Zia's 'independence' when he himself states : "The majority of the people of Pakistan have, over the past 35 years, learnt to be mistrustful of those in power who exploit the name of Islam."[10]

Obviously Zia's regime is backed by the far more substantial force of US imperialism, and according to Alavi himself. "The situation changed materially after 1951 when Prime Minister Mossadegh of Iran nationalised oil; and the Western powers realised that their capacity to intervene immediately and decisively in Iran (which, incidentally, they did !) was impaired by the absence of a strategic base in the area, a role that British India had fulfilled before independence Pakistan was not to be drawn into playing such a role; and a new relationship was forged under US initiative. Pakistan was involved in a military alliance which imposed on it obligations to perform a role within the US strategy for defence of its oil interests in the Middle East. As a result, US military advisors were attached to the Pakistan forces and at GHQ and began to wield much influence directly within the military establishment."[11] And while he makes much of the "CIA-sponsored press campaign.....to magnify the food shortage into a famine scare"[12] that led to the collapse of the Nazimuddin Government in 1953 and his replacement by Mohammad Ali Bogra, Pakistan's Ambassador to the US as Prime Minister,[13] he spends much time and effort to prove that Ayub's 1958 coup was not to the liking of the US.[14]. To prove his point, he quotes Major General Fazal Muqeem Khan . "Ayub Khan....within the first week of his becoming CMLA and President had completely cut himself off from the Armed Forces and ruled through the institutions of civil government.....Yahya Khan, likewise, also kept the armed forces out of all government institutions...... Those who were close to the centre of affairs at the time could not escape the conclusion that there was a secret cell in operation, with US advisers, who were at the heart of decision-making."[15] What may be an extreme tactical device resorted to by imperialism in a time of extreme crisis can hardly be taken as the only proof of its intervention. In fact, Alavi appears to be pleading the case for Zia-ul-Haq's independence from imperialist tutelage indirectly as well, when he states that "Although the present military regime has attempted to resurrect a similar system (to Ayub's Basic Democracy) at the local level, the system under Ayub Khan had fallen so much into disrepute that the Zia regime has tried to distance it from 'Basic Democracy,' by devising a different nomenclature for the local councils. Its structure, however, is similar; and the same set of people are now in control of it."[16] Obviously, such a method that underestimates the pervasive influence of imperialism, and its local landlord allies in the name of a 'structural imperative' is obviously not Marxism, no matter

really could have led to new and bold insights, his perspective leads him to the marginal conclusion that "the path of exploiting religious ideology, on which the regime is embarked, is one that is leading to political bankruptcy"[17] and not the class-interest of the imperialist classes that had led Pakistan into a crisis from which it cannot extricate itself.

The abstraction of the Marxist approach from the question of the seizure of state power and the political organisation of the masses also leads to curious results in Orlando Fals-Borda's paper: *Marxian Categories and Colombian Realities* For example, in his study of the social formations merely as 'a historical sequence spatially situated,' (though claiming descent from Lenin's concept in the *Development of Capitalism in Russia*) comes to the conclusion that "a social formation can be studied as an interaction of regions which are linked together historically and politically"[18] but without specifically relating this to existence of the State or to the question of State-power. From this we can come up with bizarre results.

Fals-Borda moves from his regional formations to the theory of Participatory Action Research "inspired by the well-known Marxian principles on social commitment and praxis,"[19] leading to "popular science and radical action" movements and asserts that "action research as executed in Colombia and other countries, has unveiled social, historical and political facts that have enriched national and regional processes with important political consequences."[20] We too have had experience of 'action groups' in this country; and while conscientisation groups and movements functioning within the broad political perspective of the theory of class struggle and the necessity of the seizure of state power by the exploited classes led by the working class can have a revolutionary impact, such groups functioning in abstract can even form part and parcel of imperialist strategy.[21]

In fact, Marxists view all such activity, not excluding participation in bourgeois parliamentary politics and the formation of Left Front Governments, from quite a different perspective. "First, the Left Front Government is the *result* of a long struggle waged by the toiling masses....*This government is founded on the political consciousness of the people generated by the left and democratic movement.* Secondly, this government is a source of inspiration to the toiling masses all over India......Thirdly a reorganisation of Centre-State relations is needed in the interest of the undeveloped and less developed regions of all states. This requires more resources and powers in the hands of the different states.....for the realisation of this demand for additional resources and powers a strong movement for the reorganisation of Centre-State relations must be built up. The presence of the Left Front Government can help greatly towards directing the movements."[22] Thus, concepts of region, action and movement make sense, in the case of India, only within the framework of the perspective of a people's democratic revoltuion, from the angle of the needs of class struggle and to cement the alliance of revolutionary and progressive classes. In abstract such concepts are diversionary at best and at worst, they can consciously be used by imperialism to disrupt the revolutionary movement.

Finally, even in the academic sphere, it is now obvious that the cold war itude to the study of socialism is thawing. While Ben Fine's paper originally esented as a lecture organised by the Shandong Academy of Social Scien-, makes the usual complaint that "no volume" like *Capital*, exists for the ialist economy, he does note the importance of Marx's writings on the ris Commune, *Critique of the Gotha Programme* and Stalin's *Economic Problems Socialism in the USSR*, even from an academic viewpoint.

Moreover, he provides a number of important insights into the nuinely different system that has come into being, which is a powerful gument against the commonly held bourgeois-radical theory that ialism does not exist anywhere in the world. First, while different forms of nership exist under socialism, the radically different approaches to dis-bution reflect a different system of production.

"Under capitalism, distribution relations are based upon the monopoly nership of the means of production by the bourgeoisie and the corres-nding existence of labour-power as a commodity. The value of labour-wer is an advance of capital that is a *precondition* of production. Surplus value is the result of compulsion on the labourer to work over and beyond the socially necessary labour-time required to produce the wage.....It follows that the distribution between profits and wages is interrupted and deter-mined by the process of production (of surplus value). The coercion to work harder, longer or more skillfully is to the advantage of capital. Wages are the precondition to and profits the result of production whatever the actual tim-ing of the wage system itself. Consequently, capitalist distributional relations are not determined by a distribution of surplus product between the two classes in which wages gain at the expense of profits and vice versa.....'

"For socialism, the production and consequently the distributional relations are quite different With the social ownership of the means of pro-duction, the surplus produced is not appropriated by one class at the expense of another but is divided for consumption and other purposes according to a definite plan. It follows that labour power is not a com-modity.....even if labour-power here is remunerated in the form of wages. Whatever the level of remuneration, it is the *result* of production and not its precondition."[31]

This results in the curious process by which "the bourgeois right of dis-tribution according to work is *eroded* even as it is more fully *applied*. First, more and more goods are provided for collective consumption or at zero or sub-sidised prices; and these can range from housing; health, transport and educa-tion through to the more immediate means of subsistence.....Consequently, the significance of differences in wages is reduced in proportion to the level of collective provision......Secondly, however, the result of such collective pro-vision under socialism will itself reduce the basis for wage differentials, as a more equitable and rounded system of education is developed."[32] This, in effect, will help to break down the sexual division of labour, inequalities bet-ween town and country and level of regional disparities.

This trend is further strengthened by the different approach both

capitalism and socialism have to the distribution of the means of production. "For capitalism, the accumulation of capital is determined by the pursuit of profitability in which the production of relative surplus value leads to a rising organic composition of capital and a relative displacement of living labour", resulting in chronic and growing uneven development, unemployment and periodic crises of overproduction."

"For socialism, there is first a planned division between distribution for consumption and distribution for other purposes. The allocation of the means of production can itself be broken down into various sectors",[57] and the attending or inherited evils are obviously even easier to eliminate.

However, these basic differences, resulting from the socialisation of the means of production, operate in concrete conditions and give rise to concrete problems whose solution cannot be studied without a thorough knowledge of the development of productive forces and the process of class struggle in each country concerned. Thus, from the academic point of view as well, socialist economies become the subject of study as part and parcel of a hew reality. However, one thing is clear from the volume as a whole : Neither activity isolated from theory nor theory from practice can deliver the goods. The need is the integrated development of both. And this is not possible outside the framework of the revolutonary movement.

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1 Cyril Levitt, 'Marx's Antropology and the Problems of Evolutionism', *Marxian Theory and the Third World*, 1985, p. 59

2 Heinz Lubasz, 'Marx's Concept of the Asiatic Mode of Production : A Genetic Analysis, *op cit*., p 131

3 Diptendra Banerjee, 'In Search of a Theory of Precapitalist Modes of Production' in *op. cit*., p 16 For such a critique see Tom Kemp 'Industrialisation in the Non-European World' in *op cit* pp 263-264 This article could have been included in the first section to fill this gap.

4 Programme of CPI(M) (ed. 1979), Para 86, pp 32-33

5 Karl Marx, Letter to Vera Zasulich, quoted in Miomir Jaksic, 'Marx's Theory of Modes of Production : Problems of Colonialism and Underdevelopment' in *op cit*., p. 83.

6 Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol I, p 513, quoted in *ibid*.

7 Karl Marx, To Otechestvennye Zapiski, Nov. 1877, quoted in *ibid*.

8 Karl Marx, paraphrased and quoted in D. Banerjee, *op. cit*., p. 36

9 *Ibid*., p 37 and fn. 58, 59

10 Heinz, Lubasz *op. cit*., pp. 119-120.

11 MiomirJaksic, quotes *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 1364 in *op. cit.*, p 80.

12 *Ibid.*, p 87.

13 Karl Marx, "The Future Results of the British Rule in India" (July 22, 1853) in the *First Indian War of Independence*

14 *Ibid.*, p. 33 (Emphasis added)

15 *Ibid.*, p 32

16 Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, p. 1175 quoted in Jaksic, *op cit.*, p 79

17 Miomir Jaksic, *op cit.*, p 80.

18 Harold Wolpe, 'The Articulation of Modes and Forms of Production' in *op cit.*, p 90.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 91

20 *Ibid.*

21 Bipan Chandra, Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India, 1981

22 *Ibid.*, p. 328. I have earlier criticised the politics of this approach in my article on 'Bourgeois Historiography and the Peasant Question' in *Social Scientist*, 83, June 1979, p. 75, fn 16.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 27 (emphasis added).

24 *Ibid.*, (emphasis added)

25 G. Kitching quoted in Wolpe, *op cit.*, p. 98.

26 Wolpe, *op. cit.*, p 102

27 Lubasz, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

28 Diptendra Banerjee, 'Marx and the Original Form of India's Village Community' in *op cit.*, p. 139.

29 Lubasz, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

30 Sundarayya, 'Differentiation of the Peasantry. Results of Rural Surveys in Andhra Pradesh', *Social Scientist*, nos. 56, 57, 1977.

31 Harbans Mukhia, 'Marx on Pre-Colonial India. An Evaluation' in *op cit.*, p 184.

32 Hamza Alavi, 'Class and State in Pakistan', *op cit.*, p. 233.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 230.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 228.

35 *Ibid.*, pp 230-231.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 233.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 239.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 241.

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*, p. 262.

41 *Ibid.*, p. 237.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 250.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 251.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 254.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 257.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 255.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 262.

48 Orlando Fals-Borda, 'Marxian Categories and Colonial Realities' in *op cit.*, p. 202

49 *Ibid.*, pp 202-203

50 *Ibid.*, pp 204-205

51 See Prakash Karat, 'Action Groups/Voluntary Organisations: A Factor in Imperialist Strategy' in *The Marxist* Vol II No 2 April-June 1984, pp 19-54

52 Draft of the Political Organisational Report of the Central Committee for the 12th Congress of the CPI(M), Calcutta Dec 25-30 1985, p 56 (emphasis added)

53 Ben Fine, 'On the Political Economy of Socialism' in *op cit* pp 279-280

54 *Ibid.*, p 285-286

55 *Ibid.*, p 287

56 *Ibid.*, p 290

57 *Ibid.*, pp 290-291

Editorial Note

THE CURRENT number of *Social Scientist* is devoted to a discussion of themes around the new education policy which is being presented to the Parliament. For the last one year, the proposed changes in the education policy which the Government is embarking upon have been debated at various levels in the country. As this debate reaches the forum of the Parliament, it is only appropriate that our journal should devote an entire number for a discussion of some of the issues involved.

The new education policy, as several of the papers included in the current number argue, must be seen as a completment to the new economic policy initiated by the Government. As the focus of economic strategy shifts explicitly towards stimulating export demand and the demand for a variety of luxuty consumption goods through *inter alia*, the induction of imported "modern technology", a parallel development in the realm of education is towards building up so-called "centres of excellence" which would essentially train a small and exclusive section for providing the manpower required by this technology.

But the link between the two is more than purely functional one. Both are informed by similar predilections; both represent a withdrawal of commitment from hitherto avowed social objectives; in education policy, the withdrawal is from the principle of free and compulsory mass education. Both epitomise, to use a cliche, an "elitist bias" : in education policy, this entails relegating millions to perpetual backwardness through "non-formal education" and "open universities" while the "meritorious", who in effect would be the children of the elite, would be nurtured in "model schools" and "centres of excellence". Both are visualised as constituting solutions, similar in texture of course, to the crisis of the economy under capitalist dispensation. The solution envisaged in the general economic sphere, namely a deliberate solution envisaged in the general economic sphere, namely a deliberate acceptance and official encouragement of a social hiatus in a bid to usher in post-haste, capitalism of the twenty-first century vintage. Needles to say, the strategy from which both sets of policies are derived, is one which is pregnant with authoritarian consequences.

What is wrong with this strategy is not only that it is "elitist", not only that it deserves moral condemnation, but additionally that it would not even make capitalism blossom as its proponents presumably imagine. In the purely economic sphere, the disastrous consequences of this strategy are already evident in the massive trade deficit which the country is currently facing. But if we shift our gaze to the sphere of education, we cannot fail to be impressed by one extremely significant historical fact: no country has

experienced rapid capitalist industrialisation in this century without having made a substantial dent on illiteracy. The nature and course of capitalist industrialisation may have been reprehensible as far as the people in and around the country were concerned; but even the most reprehensible form of capitalist industrialisation has found it necessary to provide itself with a foundation of substantial mass literacy. The achievement of socialist countries in combating illiteracy, of course, has been phenomenal, and need not be repeated here. But in the contemporary world, even capitalist industrialisation, if it is to attain a degree of rapidity, cannot be sustained without an attack on mass illiteracy. Whether we look at Japan or South Korea, this lesson comes through clearly.

A notable feature of the Indian scenario, which is both a symptom of as well as a contributory factor towards the feebleness of our capitalist development, has been the existence of pervasive mass illiteracy even four decades after independence. The roots of this phenomenon are perhaps the same as those of the feebleness of capitalist development itself, namely the pre-capitalist relations with which capitalism has come to terms. But, be that as it may, to think of a burgeoning capitalist development without getting to grips with this essential fact, is absurd. And herein lies the contradiction of the new education policy.

*SITARAM YECHURY**

Educational Development in India

BY NOW it is fairly certain that the current session of Parliament will adopt a new education policy. During the past one year, the country has been debating the changes that were proposed by the Rajiv Government. In fact, it would be wrong to say that the country has been debating it since less than 40 million of the 700 millions of our countrymen are in a position to read the newspapers. Nevertheless, on the one hand there has been the officially sponsored debate with the "educationists", administrators and sychophants heralding the policy as the harbinger of the 21st century. On the other hand, a widespread debate is taking place amongst the academic community—students and teachers—and people at large which is generating a groundswell of public opinion opposing the new education policy as a strategy that will increase illiteracy and take India to the 21st century, leading the world of illiterates. However, even while such a debate has been going on, the Government has put into effect the new policy through the Seventh Five Year Plan and this year's budget.

This education policy is neither an accident nor an aberration. It is the logical corollary to the new economic strategy adopted by the ruling classes. Inherent in the path of capitalist development in India is the fact that the domestic market becomes increasingly narrow. This places increasing reliance on exports and changes in the product-mix, catering to the luxury demand of the rich. The crisis, constantly intensified by the deepening international capitalist crisis, requires of the Indian ruling classes to rely increasingly on capital intensive technology. This necessity finds expression in the new economic strategy adopted by the Rajiv Government.

There is an important consequence of applying such a strategy to the field of education. The large scale induction of modern technology requires a manpower capable of manning it. Further, by its very nature of being capital intensive, it requires a small section trained to man such technology. The success of such a strategy, amongst others, depends on training an exclusive section competently while the vast masses can remain illiterate. So the education system has to be reoriented to meet the demands of modern technology, while at the same time the expenditure on education outside of this requirement needs to be reduced. This in fact, is the essence of the new policy which is reflected in the decision to produce the required intellectual manpower through the 'model schools' and 'centres of excellence', while consigning the

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millions to ignorance and backwardness through 'non-formal educatio and 'open universities'[1]

During the course of the debate on this policy many issues have bee raised that tend to obscure the basic intention of the ruling party in puttin forward this new education policy. Why are changes in education policy eve made ? What factors determine the extent and type of education that is pro vided under various social systems and at various points of time ? Is educa tion to be confused with mere instruction ?

It is necessary to put the present policy in a historical perspective with specific reference to the evolution of the existing education system in our country, in order to understand the fact that the changes in the education system were always determined in the main by the contemporary needs of the ruling classes. This is the express, if limited, purpose of this article.

The Marxist Approach

Education understood as mere instruction existed in the most primitive forms of social organisation. The purpose it served in these societies was to transmit the skills—hunting, food gathering, etc.,—to the younger generation in order to augment the existing level of productive forces and to replace the personnel eliminated through the ageing process. The process of social development, the increase in population and its needs, led to increase in productivity and then to the eventual division of labour. Division of labour, necessitated by the increases in social needs and productivity, becomes the elemental factor propelling the advance of human civilisation. Initially, based upon natural factors such as sex, natural dispositions (strength, disabilities, etc.) the division of labour between material and mental labour appears. This division ushers in a new level of social organisation and at the same time signifies the division of society into different classes and with this development arises a stage where one society one section of the population does the work of discharging the simple manual labour and few privileged persons occupaing themselves with directing this labour.

Engels observes, "It is clear that so long as human labour was still so little productive that it provided but a small surplus over and above the necessary means of subsistence, any increase of the productive forces, extension of trade, development of the state and law, or foundation of art and science, was possible only by the means of a greater division of labour. And the necessary basis for this was the great division of labour between the masses discharging simple manual labour and the few privileged persons directing labour, conducting trade and public affairs, and, at a later stage, occupying themselves with art and science."[2]

With the development of class divided society, education ceases to be merely a process of instruction and transmission of skills. In addition, to transmitting the necessary skills, education becomes the process of transmitting also a counsciousness specific to that form of social organisation. Marx and Engels note, "Division of labour only becomes truly such from the

moment when a division of material and mental labour appear. From this moment onwards, consciousness can really flatter itself that it is something other than consciousness, that it really represents something without representing something real; from now on consciousness is in a position to emancipate itself from the world and proceed to the formation of "pure" theory, theology, philosophy, morality, etc."[3]

In class societies, the nurturing of a specific consciousness becomes necessary for the continuance of the class rule. The process of education under the class society, therefore, embraces the process of generating and nurturing a consciousness in the interest of the ruling class.

As Marx and Engels observe, "The ideas of the ruling class are in every *epoch, the ruling ideas : i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing* more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations; dominant material relations grasped as ideas : hence of the relations which made the one class the ruling one, and therefore, the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things, consciousness, and therefore, think. In so far, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an historical epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things, rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, *and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age*; thus their ideas' are the ruling ideas of the epoch" (emphasis added).[4]

However, in all class divided societies, as Kalinin notes, "Slave holding, feudal, capitalist—the ruling classes strove to mask their rule and palm off their narrow class interests as the interests of the whole society. They served up their exploited morality as a morality of all mankind, raised it to the rank of an external truth based on foundations existing outside of human society, independent of man and of the given economic and social system and proceeding as it were from God..........Thus in a class society, there never has been, nor can there be, education outside or above classes."[5]

In societies prior to capitalism, the process of education was essentially confined to those sections belonging to the ruling classes, i.e. .....to those, who consequent to the division of material and mental labour, had leisure at their disposal to conduct the affairs of the society and planned productive activities. The example of Greek institutions and more specifically, the Indian system of "Gurukuls' illustrate this fact. The story of 'Ekalavya' illustrates the fact that not only was education confined to the ruling classes but that the labouring classes were disallowed from learning.

The Two Faces of Education

With the development of productive forces and the division of society

into two antagonistic camps--bourgeoise and the proletariat—and when all relations in society have subsumed under the dominant capital labour relationship, it becomes necessary for the bourgeoisie to impart technical skills and knowledge to the proletariat whose development is an essential element in the working of the capitalist system. As Kalinin notes, "The ideal of the capitalists is to see in the workers and peasants as their obedient servants bearing the burden of exploitation without a murmur. Proceeding from this, the capitalist would prefer not to foster daring and courage in the workers and peasants, would perfer not to give them any education whatsoever. But you is easier to cope with people who are ignorant and down-trodden. But you cannot win wars of conquest with such people, and they could not operate machines and machine tools without elementary knowledge. Mutual competition under conditions of technical progress, the armaments race, etc., on the one hand and the struggle of the workers and peasants to acquire an education, on the other hand, compel the bourgeoisie to give the working people at least the crumbs of knowledge while wars of plunder force it to cultitvate among the working masses stamina, courage and other qualities dangerous for the bourgeoisie."[6]

Thus it becomes necessary for the capitalists to provide a certain degree of education to the working people, which will serve and strengthen its class domination. But while ensuring the spread of education, this in itself creates conditions for raising the level of consciousness of the working class. As Marx and Engels noted in the *Communist Manifesto*, "Not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death unto itself: it has also called into existence the men who are to wield these weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians." Further, they note, "the bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education. In other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie." The bourgeoisie for its own advance, initially in its fight against feudalism and monarchy and later for the consolidation of its rule, gives the proletariat knowledge and skills which in turn can be used by the organised working class as weapons against this very bourgeois class rule. Education, under capitalism, therefore, assumes a contradictory nature : A reflection of its basic contradiction i.e., the social nature of production and individual nature of appropriation.

The Historical Background

While spread of education beyond the confines of the ruling classes was necessitated by the development of capitalism, this by no means meant that the class division in education was eliminated. Such class divisions continue as long as society is divided into classes. Studies in the development of education in the industrialised countries confirms the pattern that the mass of working people are to be educated to the extent necessary and this was determined by the development of the productive forces alone. Soon after the American independence in 1779, Thomas Jefferson, with the farsightedness of the rising bourgeoisie, moved the "Bill for the More General Diffu-

sion of Knowledge". Though this bill was defeated at that time, the philosophy behind it was to influence the development of the American education system in later years. This philosophy aimed at preparing the young people for one of the two groups in society, "labouring and the learned". Jefferson argued for a three-tier education system. The first level consisting of 3 years of elementary schooling at state expense. "The best of such boys would then proceed to the grammar school to be supported by state expense". One each from these schools will then go to the college to be, "educated, boarded and clothed for three years: the expense of which annually shall be paid by the treasury". The idea was that such a school system would engage in 'raking a few geniuses from the rubbish'.[7]

While the need for developing a system of education where training and knowledge would support and strengthen the capitalist rule was considered essential, at the same time, education was also seen as an element of capitalist social control. As Rev. George Washington Hosmer who contested from Buffalo (USA) and led a struggle for public education in 1840s said, "thousands among us have not dreamed of the effects of popular education : they have complained of its expensiveness, not forseen that it will diminish vagrancy and papuperism and crime, that it will be an antedote to mobs : and prevent the necessity of a standing army to keep our own people in order. Every people may make their own choice, 'to pay teachers or recruiting sargents', to support schools or constables or watchmen."[8]

The growth of capitalism, the subsequent crisis and working class struggles, the first factory strikes in the United States taking place in 1824, formed the background for the American Public School system. Its two main ideological under-pinnings were 'equality of educational opportunity' and 'upward social mobility'. By 1942, 80000 schools were established essentially for the white population and its philosophy was, nevertheless, to create an illusion among the people that the capitalist system would benefit all equally and that upward social mobility is possible within the system of capitalism. The establishment of such schools was, in itself, the ideological expression of the capitalist class rule.

Contradictions Within Bourgeois Education

With the emergence of monopoly capitalism, the educational system develops in such a manner that science and knowledge are regulated and placed at the disposal and service of capital. Marx's analysis in *Capital* reveals that in a capitalist society, science becomes "a productive force distinct from labour and pressed into the service of capital".[9] In the era of monopoly capitalism, scientific research is more highly organised than ever before, but always with the over-riding aim of private profit, and devoted increasingly to war. The training of natural scientists is so departmentalised as make it difficult to acquire a theoretical grasp of natural science as a whole, and such students receive no training at all in the study of human society. Conversely, social and historical studies are cut off from the natural sciences and from each other. Economics is separated from history and both from politics. His-

tory is taught as though it was not a branch of science at all. In the natural sciences, the student may know nothing of Marxism, yet at least he recognises the dialectical processes in nature, even though he does not know them by that name; but the laws of dialectics mean nothing to the bourgeois historian, who does not even recognise the class struggle.

This separation of natural sciences from social sciences and the separation of various branches of social sciences, serves the purpose of preventing the student from acquiring a knowledge of the totality of his or her existence and on the other hand, gives him or her a distorted world view. An educational system that is deliberately used by capitalism, in its offensive against Marxism and Socialism. Education under capitalism, therefore, reflects the conflict in bourgeois consciousness between the need to develop science as a productive force and the need to conceal the true relationship between labour and capital.

Thus, education under capitalism while making science and knowledge subservient to the interests of capitalism also becomes highly receptive to the process of development of capitalism. While the development of capitalism necessitated an increasing emphasis on efficiency, this found reflection in the educational system. Concepts of 'Career education', 'individualised education' etc., were formulated. A career began at the elementary school level, with the introduction of the IQ and Aptitude Tests, and individualised feeding for the job market by 'ability groups'. However, with the crisis, the education system began to turn out more people than could be absorbed by the capitalist market. Hence, it became necessary to either curtail education facilities or to lengthen the process of education. What we are witnessing today in India is precisely a process which is linked to the crisis of capitalism. In 1959, the Carnegie Commission Report of the USA titled 'The American High School Today' suggested a three-tier system introducing the concept of junior colleges which were the only channel through which college enrolment would be made. They ultimately became the biggest means of eliminating students from higher education. State intervention could also be seen in USA through reduced allocations for education, attempts to raise 'standards', charging tution fees, ending open admissions to the New York City University etc. In 1975-76, the Evers College which had a 84 per cent Black student body, was closed down and an attempt made to close the Hostos College which was predominantly for Puerto Rican students.

So, we see that education under capitalism places science and knowledge at the disposal of capital and acts as the ideological instrument to support the rule of capital. However, such an education also provides the consciousness which can be used by the proletariat as a weapon in its struggle against the capitalist state. As this contradiction comes out into the open, the state steps up its attack on the democratic rights and represses the struggles of those who receive this education, particularly when it is linked with the struggles of the working people. In this process, education itself, may become the casuality. However, the ruling classes, at all times, also attempt to ensure that the basic class requirement for their continued rule is produced,

if necessary at gunpoint.

It is only under socialism, with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the majority over the minority, that knowledge is freed from its bondage. Instead of serving the interests of capital, the educational system would now serve the interests of the entire society, its working people. For the first time, knowledge is placed, unfettered, at the disposal of the human race, for its advancement. Creativity blossoms instead of being stifled under the rule of capital and its profit motive.

In the light of this historical background and the perspective provided by Marxist analysis, namely that the extent and type of education at any point of time is determined, in the main, by the needs of the ruling classes, we examine the evolution of the Indian educational system in the colonial period, the changes that have been effected since Independence. These changes form the background to the reforms being proposed today.

Colonial Education

The origins of the present ed ıcational system in India and its evolution during the colonial period was dii ectly linked with the efforts of the British to consolidate their rule. Initially, their efforts were directed towards conciliation with the upper class 'natives'. One of the ways in which this understanding expressed itself was the official patronage given to traditional and oriental learning. Warren Hastings founded the Calcutta Madrassa in 1791 and Jonathan Duncan established the Benaras Sanskrit College in 1792.

In Britain, however, there was a sharp reaction and opposition to his point of view from various quarters including Evangelists, Liberals and Utilitarians who were all together in strongly recommending the introduction of English education. The spokesman of the first school of thought was Charles Grant who served the East India Company's Administration for 40 years in London and Calcutta. Writing in 1792, he observed that, "The people of Hindustan are a race of men lamentably degenerate and base.....Hinduism is a fabric of error." He further argued that that the ignorance and backwardness of the Hindus could be removed only with the introduction of Protestant Christianity and arts and sciences of Europe.[10]

The most famous spokesman of the Liberals was Thomas Babington Macaulay, who in his famous minute of February 2, 1935 observed that "a single shelf of a good European Library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." James Mill, the chief spokesman for the English Utilitarians remarked, "The great need should not have been to teach Hindu learning but useful learning", dismissing the former as "obscure and worthless knowledge".[11]

Notwithstanding the different points of view, it is clear that the ruling intellectual opinion in Britain during the end of 18th century and the first half of the 19th was to encourage English education. In 1813, the Evangelists succeeded in obtaining entry for Christian missionaries and the 1813 Charter

of the East India Company set aside, "a sum of not less than one lakh of rupees in each year for the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India and also the introduction of a knowledge of sciences among the inhabitants". This, infact, reflected the conflict of opinions of the period.

A section of Indians actively advocated the spread of English. Raja Ram Mohan Roy wrote to the Acting Governor General, Lord Amherst protesting against the establishment of a Sanskrit College which would "load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties, metaphysical description of little or no practical use to professions or society.[12] After the 1913 Charter, the initiative to establish English education was taken by those sections which had business and commercial links with the British, leading to the establishment of the Hindu College in Calcutta in 1817 and the Elphinstone College in Bombay in 1827.

Meanwhile in Britain, the debate between the Anglicists and the Orientalists continued. This was reflected in their even division in the "General Committee for Public Institution" that was constituted in 1823 to formulate an education policy. Unable to arrive at a conclusion, this committee appealed to the Governor General, Lord Bentick to take a decision in 1835. Lord Bentick, in turn, asked Macaulay as President of this Committee, to give his opinion. The result was the famous note of February 2, 1835 in which Macaulay noted that selective natives must be educated, "as interpretors between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect." A month later, Bentick ruled, "the great object of British Government was henceforth the promotion of European literature and science—all funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone."

There were at least three important reasons that had a significant bearing on this ruling of Bentick. The first was the growing opinion and the recognition of the fact that the British could derive political benefits from English education. Amongst many others who held this opinion, Charles Trevelyan (1838) noted that, "The spirit of English literature cannot but be favourable to the English connection" and argued that this would stop Indians from treating Britishers as foreigners and make them "Intelligent and zealous cooperators."[13]

Secondly, the framing of the education policy was guided by the practical administrative needs of the colonialists. At the time of the passing of the 1833 Charter Act, the East India Company was in serious financial difficulties. One method suggested was to cut down expenditure on European employees and instead employ Indians at a much lower salary. The 1833 Charter opened the lower order civil service jobs to Indians. But this required English educated Indian clerks. Hence the policy of 1835.

Thirdly, English education was also seen as an important basis for expanding the British market in India by rearing English values and tastes. As

Macaulay noted, "wearing our brand of cloth and working with our cutlery "they should not be too ignorant or too poor to value and buy English manufactures." A bigger market for Lancashire and Sheffield had to be created. Macaulay's Note, Bentick's ruling and the establishment and growth of English education in India was an expression of the direct needs of the ruling colonial power. The education system in India, a legacy that continues till date, originated not because of any individual or intellectual opinion but arose out of the contemporary needs of the ruling classes.

In 1837, the English replaced Persian as the official and Court language and in 1844 Hardinge announced preference for English educated Indians in the Civil Service. These two steps effectively sealed any growth of education other than English education. The Hardinge Proclamation of 1884 had its desired effect. The demand for English education rose sharply leading to unplanned growth of institutions. Within a few years, the need arose for a systematic and an effective administrative system. Coupled with this, questions regarding the degree of economic liability that the company would undertake were raised. Consequently, in 1853, an enquiry was conducted which resulted in the famous despath of Sir Charles Wood to the Board of Director in 1854. Described by many as the 'Magna Carta' of English education in India, this despatch set forth a comprehensive scheme of education for the country. Following the political, economic, administrative and cultural needs of the British, this despatch reaffirming the policy laid down in 1835 recommended the concentration of higher education to the upper classes. Its recommendation for the establishment of universities in India led to the establishment of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras Universities in 1857. The Woods Despatch also suggested the administrative machinery for the education system which included among other things, the university senates, the specific methods of examination, setting up of separate departments of public instruction under an important officer called the Director of Public Instructions : in fact, the entire administrative set up that contines to exist even today. The despatch also indicated that there should be a gradual withdrawal of the company's liability towards secondary school education. The Wood's despath, therefore, was also an expression of the contemporary needs of the colonial powers in India.

The next two decades which witnessed considerable growth of higher education and induction of Indians into the lower order of the civil services gave rise to the need to consolidate the structure as well as find methods of reducing the expenditure on education. The result was the appointment of a commission in 1882, "to enquire into the manner in which effect had been given to the principles of the Despatch of 1854 and to suggest fresh measures as it may think desireable, in order to the further carrying out of the policy therein laid down". Popularly known as the Hunter Commission, it recommended the gradual withdrawal of the State from direct support and management of institutions, suggested general guidelines for college fees that secondary education, as far as possible, should be provided only on a grant-in-aid basis and that the state should withdraw as early as possible from

the direct management of the secondary schools. In effect, it recommended the consolidation of the existing system while reducing costs.

The next twenty years saw a tremendous growth of English education. In 1882, there were 63 English Arts colleges; in 1902, there were 140. The number of unaided English Secondary schools increased from 2133 to 5097. There was a marked increase in the unaided colleges and schools privately managed by Indians. There were only eleven such colleges in 1882 with 716 students and in 1902 this increased to 53 colleges with 5803 students. The number of such schools doubled and the number of students increased threefold.[14]

This growth reflected the fact that English education was regarded as a necessity for employment. Under colonial conditions, with the disintegration of traditional crafts, the only avenue possible for meaningful employment was English education. The Hunter Commission report provided the basis for Indians to take the initiative in setting up such institutions.

Impact of National Movement

This growth was taking place at a time when the aspirations of the Indian bourgeoisie was finding expression. As class antagonisms develop, sharpen and express themselves in the struggles of the contending classes, these find expression in the realm of ideas and consciousness. The establishment of Indian National Congress, the rise of mass discontent against the colonial administration raised a number of issues about British rule in India. This had its impact in the colleges. The consciousness and exposure that accompanied English education was finding an expression that was not conducive to continued British rule. Though this feeling had not yet led to the demand for complete independence and was confined to decribing the rule as 'un-British' and demanding the Westminister model for India, it nevertheless caused problems for the British rule. "It was in the time of Lord Dufferin that higher education came to be regarded as the root cause of the growing unrest in the country. Confidential and semi-confidential circulars were issued to local authorities to curtail government grants to universities and colleges. British officials saw a direct link between English education and use of Indian nationalism".[15]

One of the many incidents, will illustrate the British 'concern'. In 1897, in the year of the plague, there was mass discontent against the inadequate administrative steps taken and specifically against the harassment of Indians by British soldiers. Bal Gangadhar Tilak was in the forefront of this attack against the British in Poona. The public anger resulted in the murder of the Collector and Plague Officer of Poona, Mr. Rand and his assistant. Damodar and Balkrishna Chepakar were executed for the murder. Both were well educated. Tilak was charged with sedition and sentenced to 18 months rigorous imprisonment. Following this, the Secretary of State, Lord Hamilton wrote to Curzon finding it "impossible to dissociate their ideas and their hatred of England from the course of education and training

through which they have passed."

Curzon proceeded to initiate steps for reforming the education system in order to control the growth of Indian nationalism. However, in his address at the Simla Conference in 1901, he refrained from making any reference to the political considerations that led him to such educational reform. He was congratulated by Lord Hamilton for avoiding any reference to political considerations and instead emphasising the necessity for reforms on educational grounds alone. This process led to the establishment of a commission under the chairmanship of Mr. Thomas Raleigh in 1902 which became the basis for the 1904 Act.

These developments at the turn of the century were, infact, a landmark. The educational system that the British had worked out to consolidate its rule was providing results that were not entirely to its own liking and in an embryonic form threatened its rule. Within four decades, the educational system was producing results contrary to its objectives. As we argued earlier, this was a reflection of the aspirations of the class—the Indian bourgeoisie—that was seeking release from colonial bondage. It would be wrong to conclude, as many bourgeois historians do, that it is the educational system that generated the rise of Indian nationalism.[16] On the one hand, the class needs dictated the spread of English education, and on the other hand, it generated a consciousness that could be used against that very rule. The "political unrest" was an expression of a rising class (the Indian bourgeoisie) and its aspirations, which was still in the process of defining its objectives.

In a sense, this marked a turning point in the colonial government's education policy. The doctrine that the State should not interfere in education was abandoned and instead a policy where the state would have the initiative and control a planned system from the Centre, was advanced. Curzon believed that the Government would have to reassert "a responsibility which there had been a tendency to abdicate".[17]

Thus came the 1904 Act on the basis of the Raleigh Commission. The Report noted, "In all matters relating to higher education, efficiency must be the first and paramount consideration. It is better for India that a comparatively small number of young men should receive a sound liberal education than that a large number should be passed through an inadequate course of instruction leading to a depreciated degree."[18] This, infact, justified what Curzon emphasised "It is quality, not quantity that we should have in view."

The attempt was to control the growth of political awareness in Indian universities, control the administration of universities and colleges and restrict educational opportunities. Accordingly, the Commission recommended, amongst other things, checking the growth of higher education, reconstituting the senates giving Europeans a majority, revising conditions of affiliation and recognition, control over text books etc. Immediately after the 1904 Act, the problem of controlling schools arose and the Act had to be amended so that no new school could be opened without prior recognition.

This was contained in the 1913 education policy resolution.

Struggle for Expansion of Education

Understandably, there was a sharp reaction from the leaders of the national movement, who took up cudgels against the proposed curtailment. On the contrary, they raised the demand for expansion and spread of education. The Indian National Congress at its sessions in 1902, 1903 and 1904 adopted resolutions condemning the Raleigh Commission report and the Act. Indians in the senates took up the issue vehemently and drew the debate on to the streets. Surendranath Bannerjee and Gopal Krishna Gokhale led the protests.

The Indian bourgeoisie saw in this a clear attempt on the part of the British to consolidate its rule and to deliberately neglect the dissemination of scientific skills and confine themselves to producing administrative clerks. Visualising the need for such personnel for the development of capitalism in Independent India, Jamshedji Tata, with the vision of a rising bourgeoisie, wrote to Lord Curzon urging the expansion of technical institutions. His request being refused, Tata worked out a scheme for starting a research institute for training Indians in advanced sciences which eventually led to the estabishment of Indian Institute of Sciences at Bangalore in 1909. In fact, the demand for technical education existed since the 1880s. Faced with the refusal of the British to open such institutions, Indians established the first of such schools in 1887 and the Victoria Jubilee Technical School in 1904. An Association was formed in Calcutta for the advancement of scientific and industrial education with the express purpose of sending Indians to U.K., USA and Japan. Leaders of the Swadeshi movement in Bengal started the Engineering College in Jadavpur in 1907. Infact, the Madras Provincial government in 1906 decided to start a department of industries. The Secretary of State, Lord Morley, directed the provincial government to withdraw the scheme. In 1911, Gokhale introduced a Bill for permissive and gradual introduction of free and compulsory primary education through local bodies, which did not receive official support.

From the beginning of this century, the debates on education policy reflect the clash of class interests of the British and the Indian bourgeoisie. While the former, attempted to restrict education, impose controls with a view to stoping students from taking part in politics, the latter saw the advantages of expansion of higher education as strengthening the national movement and for providing the human resources for the development of capitalism in Independent India.

In passing, it must be noted that the British, taking lessons from the Indian experience, were careful not to expand higher education in the other colonies, particularly in Africa.[10]

Subsequently, there were many more commissions, the Sadler Commission of 1917, the Hartog Commission of 1929, the Abbot Wood Report of

1936-37 and the Sargent Report of 1944. There was also the Sapru Committee of 1934 appointed by the United Provinces Government to enquire into the causes of unemployment. Its recommendations for the diversification of courses for training technical personnel and the debates reflected the conflict of class interests between the colonial rulers and the Indian bourgeoisie.

The demands of the national movement found a more concrete expression in the demand for education in the mother tongue. This was felt as a necessary element to draw the mass of Indian people into the struggle for freedom. As Gandhi noted, "Among the many evils of foreign rule, the blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country will be counted by history as one of the greatest. It sapped the energy of the nation.....it has estranged them from the masses."[20]

The tasks in the field of education—free and compulsory education, education in the mother toungue etc.,—that remain unsolved till date and which form the basic content of the demands of the democratic sections today were, infact, raised in our country by the national movement and its leaders. These were raised at that time by them as it served their class interests. However, as we have argued in an earlier section and as we shall subsequently discuss, these very demands were abandoned by the ruling classes once they assumed power after independence, once again in their class interest.

Ideological Support to Bourgeois Democracy

Following the transfer of power, the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) decided in January 1948 to set up two commissions, one to deal with university education and the other to deal with secondary education, recognising the fact that the requirements of independent India would be different and hence a restructuring of the system was imminent. This decision came at a time when the promises made to the people in the field of education during the freedom struggle were to be implemented. Free and compulsory education, upto the age of 14 was being debated in the Constituent Assembly, which ultimately found expression in the Directive Principles of State Policy. The Scheme that seems to have been worked out was that universal elementary education would be achieved by 1960 and necessary changes in the secondary as well as higher education would have to be made in accordance with the needs of an independent India.

The first of the Commissions to be appointed was the University Education Commission in 1948 under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishanan to report on Indian university education and suggest improvement and extensions that may be desirable to suit present and future requirements of the country.

This Commission, which produced a comprehensive and volumunous report, set for itself the task of re-orienting the educational system to face the, "great problem, national and social, the acquisition of economic independence. the increase of general prosperity, the attainment of an effective

democracy over riding the distinctions of caste and creed, rich and poor, and a rise in the level of culture. For a quick and effective realisation of these aims, education is a powerful weapon if it is organised efficiently and in public interest. As we claim to be a civilised people, we must regard the higher education of the rising generation as one of our principle concerns."[21]

Implicit in this was the task that was also repeatedly stated by Jawaharlal Nehru, that the achievement of political independence must be transformed into economic independence. Towards this end, there was a need to increase the trained and skilled personnel who will undertake this task. The transformation of political independence into economic independence, in class terms, meant that the progress of capitalist development in India was to be ensured. Economic independence was equated with the increase of general prosperity. Corresponding to these class needs, the essential tasks of the commission were to reorient the educational system towards achieving economic independence and attainment of values to ensure an effective democracy.

Towards this end, the report of the Commission discussed re-orientation of higher education with relation to the five tenets of our constitution—Democracy, Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The idea of the report was to remould the educational system as an ideological support to parliamentary democracy. "We know what Hitler did in 6 years with the German youth. The Russians are clear in their minds about the kind of society for which they are educating and the qualities required in their citizens.....our education system must find its guiding principles in the aims of the social order for which it prepares....."[22]

On the question of economic independence, the report notes the urgent need of technicians....."there is an urgent need for such occupations and skills all over the country" which "will train a large and growing body of ambitious youth for employment as technicians in various existing industries...they will ensure a continuous flow of skilled workers for several modern industries which are being started....we are strongly of opinion that each province should have larger number of occupational institutes preferably one in each district giving training in as many occupations as possible.."[23] These were the main thrust of the recommendations although the commission did touch upon all apsects of higher education in a comprehensive manner and made detailed recommendations for the improvement of university management.

In its conclusion it notes, "many of these proposals will mean increased expenditure, but this increase, we are convinced, is an investment for the democratic future of a free people. With all the earnestness at our command, it solicits the government of India which charged us with this important task....and the people of India, to give their very earnest and sympathetic considerations to the financial needs of the universities, and assure them the funds without which no improvement is possible,,."[24] Notwithstanding this appeal, and the demand of the independent nation that at least 10 per cent of

the budget allocation must be set aside for education, the First Five Year P allocated 7.6 per cent only. In fact, the first education minister, Maul Abul Kalam Azad lamented that when the first draft of the First Plan made, education was almost completely ignored. Also, there seemed to b general view that only those subjects should be taken up which would g quick returns. In his view, education was the basis for the success of ev sphere in planning.

Increasing State Control

The report of this commission was submitted in August, 1949. Amc other things, the Commission had recommended the setting up of a univ sity grants commission (UGC) which will be an autonomous body organisi the governance of universities. When the Education policy resolution ca up before the Parliament, the government accepted the proposal establishing the UGC, but ruled that it shall function under the authority the Ministry of Education. Meghnad Saha, a member of the Commission b terly attacked this position in the Rajya Sabha. Hiren Mukherjee (Lok Sabl on behalf of the undivided CPI endorsed this attack and argued that 75 p cent of higher education was in the colleges and that the UGC should co the colleges. Necessary amendments to this effect were accepted, but t government was firm on not granting complete autonomy to the UGC. T critics of the Curzon reforms were themselves implementing simi measures.

The intervening period since the submission of the report and the pol resolution, was a period of militant struggles, the most important of the being the glorious Telengana armed struggle. Learning from the experier of the first half of the century and knowing fully well from their o experience, the impetus that the educated sections can give to popu movements, the rulers of independent India recognised the importance state control over education and put it into practice immediately after assu ing power.

Promotion of Technical Education

The development of capitalism required not only products of univ sities and higher education but technicians and skilled artisans. This urge need could not be fulfilled by university reforms. As noted earlier, the CA had recommended the setting up of a commission to deal with seconda education. This was reinforced by the Secondary Education Commissi appointed in September, 1952 with Dr. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar as t Chairman. The report was submitted to the first Parliament in 1953.

Reflecting the needs of the ruling classes, the chapter, titled "Reorien tion of aims and objectives" notes that "one of its (India's) most urge problems—if not the most urgent problem—is to improve producti efficiency to increase the national wealth and thereby to raise appreciably t standard of living of the people."[25]

Further, it outlines the 'dominant needs'—"training of character of fit students to participate creatively as citizens in the emerging democratic social order; the improvement of their practical and vocational efficiency so that they may play their part in building up the economic prosperity of their country; and the development of their literacy, artistic and cultural interests".[26] Needless to add, the thrust of the recommendations refer oniy to the first two. And of these, it clearly emphasises the second, "side by side with the development of this attitude (new attitude to work-dignity of labour, however 'lowly') there is a need to promote technical skill and efficiency at all stages of education so as to provide trained and efficient personnel to work out schemes of industrial and technological advancement. In the past, our education has been so academic and theoretical and so divorced from practical work that the educated classes have, generally speaking, failed to make enormous contribution to the development of this country's national resources and to add to national wealth. This must now change......."[27] The report also recommended the setting up of technical schools, polytechnics, strengthening multipurpose education, central technical institutions etc. In fact, the entire infrastructure to produce a large technical manpower.

In conformity with their aspirations for rapid capitalist development, the ruling classes required to draw in the maximum number of young people into this process. This necessitated, in addition to the demands of the national movement, that education be imparted in the mother tongue. Accordingly, the Commission recommended that, "Mother tongue in the regional language should generally be the medium of instruction throughout the secondary school stage. In addition, it suggested the teaching of English and Hindi but at different stages of education".[28]

With regards to finances, this report, like the Radhakrishnan Commission report, pleaded for sufficient funds for the success of these ambitious plans. It recommended an 'industrial education cess' and suggested that, "a certain percentage of net revenue from nationalised industries or concerns such as Railways, Communications, Posts and Telegraphs etc., should be made available for the promotion of technical education in certain fields".[29] These two reports put together sum up the reorientation of the educational system according to the needs of the ruling classes aspiring for the speedy development of capitalism. Following this came the recommendations of increased financial allocations and to make the mother tongue as the medium of instruction. These were subsequently abandoned as the crisis deepened.

Feudal Vestiges

The compromise with feudalism and the sharing of state power with the landlords, rendered the Indian bourgeoisie incapable of eliminating feudal vestiges. Apart from social evils like casteism that continue to persist, this compromise restricted the market for capitalist development in the country. Inspite of the heavy public sector investment in the Second Five Year Plan to provide the infrastructural facilities for capitalist development, such a

development was necessarily constrained by the low level of purchasing power of the mass of the Indian people. Under these conditions, capitalist development could proceed only within the constraints imposed by the level of demand and the only method of maintaining or increasing profits was by imposing greater burdens on the already impoverished masses. This naturally gave rise to crisis and stagnation in Indian industry which found its sharpest expression in the mid-sixties. These objective conditions necessitated a revision of the ambitious plans to reorient the educational system to produce a large number of educated and technical manpower. Instead, a technical manpower capable of manning the greater profit making capital intensive technology was needed. Necessary changes in the educational system had to be undertaken. One of the ways that this found reflection was in the decision to open the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) at the expense of expansion of polytechnics and industrial training institutes (ITIs).

Therefore, while the recommendations of the Commissions were being implemented and a rapid expansion of education took place, (however distant from meeting the requirements of the people) the objective situation called for a halt in this expansion, if not reversal. By the beginning of the 60s, signs of growing educated unemployed were being noticed.

Growing Economic Crisis

In this background, the Education Commission of 1964 was appointed with Dr. D.S. Kothari as Chairman, popularly known as the Kothari Commission. The commission presented (1966) a report which even today remains the most comprehensive one. The report entitled "Education and National Development" in its Foreward noted, "Indian education needs a drastic reconstitution, almost a revolution......Tinkering with the existing situation and moving forward with faulty steps and lack of faith can make things worse than before".

The report was, in fact, the social and political expression of the economic crisis of that period. It contained, on the one hand, recommendations that reflected the democratic aspirations of the Indian people for free and compulsory education, increased financial outlay etc.—while on the other hand, it also contained recommendations which would lead to the restriction of higher education.

Regarding the constitutional provision of free and compulsory education, the report suggested that, "*all* the areas of the country should be able to provide five years of good and effective education to *all* the children by 1975-76 and seven years of such education by 1985-86".[30] Consequently, the educational policy resolution adopted by the Parliament in 1968 stated that the Constitutional directive would be fulfilled by 1980.

The report contained interesting projections. With regard to finances, it noted that on the average, the per capita expenditure of education by 1985-86 should be *at least* Rs. 54 per head, at 65-66 price level. It assumed an increase of 10 per cent per annum of expenditure on education again at 64-

65 prices and noted that, "The figure of 6 per cent of GNP invested in education by 1986 may seem to be an ambitious target. We do not quite hold this view" and continued, "By, 1986 it is likely that the figure of 10 per cent of the GNP invested in education will become common in most countries".[31]

The Commission was appointed in 1964, the report was submitted in 1966 and the policy resolution was adopted in 1968. This was the period when the economic crisis found a sharp political expression. The mass discontent against the Congress policies, the rising protests of the student community against the deteriorating situation and employment opportunities, culminated in the rejection of the Congress in several States of the country in the 1967 general elections. The active role of the student community in this process was viewed with great concern by the ruling classes.

The education policy resolution of 1968 had very little to do with the overall recommendations of the Kothari Commission. Only those aspects which suited the ruling classes, the three language formula, the centres of excellence, governance of universities etc., were incorporated. Infact, with relation to governance, the Government found the Kothari Commission lacking in many respects and appointed the Gajendra Gadkar Commission in 1969. The recommendations of this commission regarding the appointment of the VCs, structure and composition of the senates etc., which gave the State a greater control over the administration of Higher Education corresponded to the ruling class interests and was, therefore, implemented.

Cut in Educational Outlay

While the Kothari Commission report was released, the Government was discussing the Fourth Five Year Plan. Notwithstanding the Commission's recommendations, the Fourth Plan reduced the allocation for education from 7.86 per cent in the First Plan to 5.16 per cent, the actual expenditure being 4.94 per cent.

As the crisis deepened, expenditure on education was reduced. The ruling classes no longer required the expansion of education for its capitalist development. They, in fact, were unable to utilise the educated manpower already being produced. Curtailing expenditure on education in effect meant the nullification of some of the recommendations of the Kothari Commission that were democratic. On the other hand, those recommendations that served the ruling classes were accepted and sought to be implemented. Given the objective conditions obtaining at that moment, the Kothari Commission report was destined to be put in a cold storage.

Though the education policy resolution stated that there would be a review every five years, no such review was done. The ruling classes allowed the education system to continue to exist as before except for the important fact of controlling the student and university community through repressive measures. The economic crisis, the rising mass discontent found an expression on stricter control of these institutions. The response of the ruling class to the situation was increasing authoritarianism and education was no

exception. This process culminated with the declaration of Emergency and the consequent large scale repressive measures. One of the major developments of this period was the constitutional amendment during the Emergency removing education from the concurrent List and placing it in the State List.

With the defeat of the Congress(I) in the 1977 elections and the formation of the Janata Government came the draft education policy of 1978. This emphasised, among other things, 'non-formal' education. It gave the Gandhian model as the ideological support to this argument. Non-formal education for the poor and formal education for the rich. With the fall of the Janata Party this education policy, however, never saw the light of the day.

Attacks On Democratic Rights

The return to power of the Congress(I) in 1980 and the deepening economic crisis expressed itself in increasing authoritarian attacks on the democratic rights of the people. This found expression in the field of education also. Commissions were appointed and ordinances promulgated which sought, on the one hand, to curtail the available educational facilities, particularly in the field of higher eduction and, on the other hand, to abrogate the democratic rights of the university community. The Central Universities Review Committee (CURC) report which was set up by the UGC in 1981 recommended amongst others, freezing of admissions, ban on elections to student's unions, teachers and non-teaching staff associations, codes of conduct prohibiting the expression of democratic dissent, setting up of special courts/tribunals to deal with indiscipline, restructuring of the composition of senates and syndicates, replacing the elected participation of students and other sections by 'consultation'. In July, 1981, the report of the Police Commission was released and in its 56th chapter titled 'Police and Students', recommended the setting up of a statutory Police Protection Force to ensure 'discipline' in the campuses, on the lines of the notorious Industrial Security Force. Apart from giving complete licence to the police to enter educational institutions whenever they please, the Commission, infact, endorsed the establishment of police camps in various campuses. On October 21 the same year, at a meeting of the seven Vice Chancellors of Central universities convened by the UGC, a decision was taken to set up a committee of Vice Chancellors to consider these recommendations.

Apart from the ordinances in various universities essentially reflecting the above recommendations, the Viswa Bharati (Amendment) Bill was enacted in 1984. This drastically reorganised the composition of the senate and reflected the other recommendations of the CURC. This period, therefore, was one where the needs of the ruling classes—curtailing higher education (since there was the reserve of educated personnel who could not be absorbed) and curbing the protests and growing opposition to its policies in the universities—found expression in various steps taken in the field of education.

The deepening economic crisis necessitated changes in the contemporary needs of the ruling classes. As we argued above, the ruling classes themselves abandoned their earlier positions in accordance to these needs. This is clearly reflected in the furious debate that took place over the West Bengal Left Front Government's educational reforms. The central government and the ideologues of the ruling classes launched a vicious tirade against the Left Front Government on the issue of education in the mother tongue and changes in the primary school syllabus. What the Left Front Government is implementing is infact precisely what the Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar Commission had recommended in 1953, and accepted by the central government then. The attack on the Left Front Government's educational policy is also an expression of ruling class interests. When the contending classes in society take up the issues which the ruling classes have abandoned, these are attacked. The debate over the Left Front Government's education policy today is an expression of the class struggle in our country.

The deepening economic crisis also meant increased dependence of the Indian ruling classes on imperialism. The conditionalities of the IMF loan clearly stipulate the reduction of expenditure on public services including education. This has reinforced the growing attempts of the ruling classes to reduce expenditure on education and conforming to their contemporary needs. This is reflected in the fact that the outlay for education was reduced from 7.86 per cent in the First Plan to 5.83 in the Second to 4.9 per cent in the Fourth to 3.3. per cent in the Fifth, 2.2 per cent in the Sixth. The Seventh Plan has allocated a mere 2.5 per cent of the public sector outlay for education at current prices. As we have noted earlier, the Kothari Commission had projected a 'modest' per capita expenditure on education for 1985-86 as Rs. 54 per capita at 1965-66 prices level. On the basis of the figures available in this year's budget, this per capita expenditure at 1965-66 price level works out to a mere Rs. 3.10 per capita.

The developments since 1980 had still to be formalised in the form of a new policy. In fact, after considerable consultations in 1983, Indira Gandhi's Government prepared a draft that was circulated amongst exclusive sections in 1984. During the last few months of Mrs. Gandhi's tenure, a draft education policy was prepared. This draft contained most of the recommendations that are contained in the present document. The Rajiv Government only speeded up the process of formalising this policy.

Curtailing eductional opportunities, increasing Governmental control and repressive measures and, above all, the reduction in expenditure is the immediate backdrop to the recently proposed changes in the field of education—changes which will take India to the 21st century, leading the world of illiterates.

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19 Education Policy in British Tropical Africa (mimeo)

20 M.K. Gandhi, *True Education*

21 *University Education Commission Report* 1948, pp 411

22 *Ibid*., pp. 19

23 *Ibid*., pp. 59-60.

24 *Ibid*., pp. 411

25 *Report of the Secondary Education Commission*, 1953, pp. 23

26 *Ibid*.

27 *Ibid*., pp. 27

28 *Ibid*., pp. 226

29 *Ibid*., pp. 257

30 *Report of the Education Commission*, 1966, pp. 136, 137

31 *Ibid*., pp. 455.

*KUMARESH CHAKRAVARTY**

The Compelling Crisis and the New Education Policy

THE WELL-KNOWN triangle of quantity, quality, and equity in the Indian education system is more elusive today than when the National Education Policy was adopted in 1968. The state's perception of the required *quality* of education has undergone some change. More because the composition of the demand for skills has changed visibly since the mid-seventies. At the level of *quantity*, the determinants of the state's real policy are placed in a more disturbing configuration of choices and compulsions. Disturbing because, it is widely recognised that the economy must now operate with a greater bias in favour of widening disparities in income, and the poor man's access to educational opportunities must shrink at a faster pace. What is worse, the state finds it virtually impossible today to finance secondary or higher education even of the children belonging to the third and fourth deciles in the income distribution ladder. *Equity*, therefore, has to bear the heaviest burden of rhetoric when it comes to stating the policy or its perspective. The gap between the stated policy and its implementation must. consequently increase.

No wonder then that the authors of *Challenge of Education* have avoided examining how and why this gap has been widening. The credibility of the document could have been increased if it had included the scrutiny of the consistent failure of the state to implement what has been repeatedly paraded as its 'preferred' targets.

Take the relationship between the demand for skilled manpower and its supply by the formal system of education. The Education Commission (1964-66) had projected manpower requirements on the basis of the Planning Commission's estimates. A 6.5 per cent output growth rate was envisaged as the average of the 'perspective period', and the Education Commission assumed that the projected industrial growth rate of 12 per cent would generate an identical rate of growth in the demand for educated manpower from the industrial sector. The required enrolment in higher education was consequently estimated at 2.2. million in 1975/76 and 4.2 million in 1985/86.[1]

The projections went all wrong. In 1981, graduate unemployment, measured by registrations with employment exchanges, was 18.7 per cent of the total educated unemployed (matriculation and above). That was despite a negative growth in enrolment in higher eduction for some time after 1974 and again after 1977/78. In the academic year 1980/81, enrolment in higher

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education was 2.75 million (and apparently not more than 3.1 million in 1985/86) as compared to 3.17 million in 1973/74. That yields a negative growth rate for the last 12-year period.

Taking professional education separately, the requirement for doctors was estimated at one for every 3000 persons in 1975/76 (compared to one for every 5000 persons in 1966) and one for every 2000 persons in 1985. But admission to medical colleges went down to 11532 in 1980/81 from 13726 in 1973/74. Enrolment in engineering and technology colleges decreased from 2.12 lakh in 1978/79 to 1.03 lakh in 1983, and then went up to only 1.12 lakh in 1983. Unemployment among engineering graduates on the other hand, has been on the increase. Their share among all graduate-unemployed went up from less than 5 per cent in 1972/73 to about 6 per cent in 1977/78, according to the NSS data. Figures for the subsequent period must have been available to the authors of *Challenge of Education*.

Graduates with general education do constitute the highest proportion of the graduate unemployed, no doubt, the question however is, what relative roles have been played by the employment market, private cost of technical/professional education, and the restricted access to the institutions of professional education, in determining the share of general education in aggregate enrolment in higher education ? It is common knowledge that more and more students have been knocking at the doors of professional institutions for admission. It does not require extraordinary wisdom to understand that the supply side of enrolment has been determined mainly by the deceleration in the growth of real public expenditure on professional education.

Universal Elementary Education

Universal elementary eduction is a never-ending refrain in every official document on education and the *Challenge of Education* is no exception to this. What is the performance record ? The fifth plan document promised universal primary education for the 6-11 age group by 1975/76, and universal elementary education for the age-group 11-14 by 1980/81. This was "a basic programme of higher priority" and had a claim to "great attention and very large proportion of available funds". So, enrolment in primary schools was to go up to 86.2 million in 1975/76 and that in the middle schools (classes VI to VIII) to 45 million in 1980/81. Given the scarcity of resources, fulltime education was to be combined with part-time education, and the average additional enrolment in all the 8 classes was targetted at 43 lakhs per year, as against the recorded achievement of 25 lakhs prior to the Fifth Plan period.

The Sixth Plan document said that "universalisation of the primary stage of education would imply additional enrolment of about 170 lakh children in classes I to V over the next five years or an average annual rate of enrolment of 34 lakh children". The recorded achievement in additional enrolment, during the Fifth Plan period was estimated at just 20 lakhs per year. The authors of *Challenge* are aware that the rate of growth of enrolment for 1971-81 was

smaller then the age-specific population growth rate. But the explanation offered is quite interesting. The document says that "additional enrolment at the primary education level has now to come from (the) social strata which is not in a position to take advantage of expanding educational opportunities, indicated, among other things, by the deceleration in the growth of enrolment. Thus, with the slowing down of additional enrolment it seems that the first phase of educational expansion during the post-independence era has come to an end".

Who are these beneficiaries ? If they are the ones identified as 'below the poverty level', then according to official figures, their proportion at the beginning or in the second year of the eighties should not be less than 55 per cent. Do they perceive education up to class V as enough 'advantage' or should this be upto class VIII, or should it indeed be assumed that they would prefer education at least up to the secondary/higher secondary level ?

Enrolment figures can be reasonably depended upon to test this hypothesis. Over-age population (that is, those above the class-specific age in a particular class, say those above 6 plus in class I) account for not less than 10 per cent in class I while spurious enrolment may account for at least another 33 per cent. Enrolment in class I is roughly about one-fourth of the total enrolment in classes I to VIII. For the elementary stage as a whole, therefore, the ministry's figures should be reduced by at least 10 per cent. The corrected enrolment figure in 1980/81 would then be 100.8 million instead of 112 million as claimed by the Planning Commission.[2] In 1980/81, then, enrolment in class V was about 54 per cent of the total 11-year-old population. And those enrolled in class XI were less than 24 per cent of all 17-year-old population. At this participation rate, not more than 24 per cent households were able to send their children up to Class XI. And not more than 33 per cent could send their children up to class VIII.

Even if one has to make a highly oversimplified assumption that the level of education is strictly a function only of household income, (and therefore, the higher the level achieved, the higher the income of the student's parents) the conclusion in *Challenge* is quite dubious. It implies, among others, that when the gross enrolment ratio for the secondary, higher secondary level fluctuates between 21 and 24, the "first phase of educational expansion" has come to an end—a not-so-bad second-best solution ! Besides, there is a spurious suggestion in it that all but the population below the poverty level, or at least all but the bottom 40 to 50 per cent, have already become beneficiaries of expanding education, and have thereby reached a level that is good enough for continuing with the benefit. A simple quantification, on the other hand, shows that literacy, if it means education up to class VIII (that is what *Challenge* also accepts) was and continues to be the privilege of just about 33 per cent of households in India.

Overestimating the achievement can well lead to wrong prescription. The emphasis in *Challenge* on private expenditure as the major source of

finance for further expansion seems to have been influenced by such understanding. For, once the beneficiaries look proportionately large, one can argue that the beneficiaries should now be asked to pay wholly or largely for the education of their children, while those left-out, say the bottom 40 per cent, should be supported by the state, through an expansion of elementary education and scholarships for the rest of the sectors.

Actually, however, that pious idea has not been pursued as the suggested reform. The document *Perspective of Policy Formulation* which projects the likely population in classes I to VIII in 1990, shows that if the population growth rate is 1.5 per cent (itself a questionable assumption), the estimated population in the age-group 6-14 would be 174 million. To ensure that "universal elementary education is achieved by 1990", this number will have to be sent up to class VIII, and the corresponding numbers in several earlier years will have to be retained in their respective classes.

That calls for a hundred per cent retention rate of those who join class I in 1983, and of all the class I batches joining between 1984 and 1990. In other words, the entire class VIII batch of 1990, which joined class I in 1983, or the class VII batch which joined in 1984, must be in the respective classes in the target year; and nobody must drop out during the interim period. For that, enrolment has to grow at an accelerated rate from 1983, and the average growth rate during 1984/85 and 1990/91 has to be 7.6 per cent.

The achievement during the preceding six years has been 4.3 per cent. And the Planning Commission has put the target growth rate during the Seventh Plan period at 4.1 per cent, though it too, has kept "achievement of universal elementary education" as virtually its first priority. *Challenge* suggests "hard financial decisions" for the implementation of universal elementary eduction, or "alternatively other educational approaches such as non-formal/distance education, and vocationalisation". The Planning Commission chooses the alternative, and avoids the hard decision—including a big rise in public expenditure on education—since, "Increasing enrolment in full-time elementary schools beyond this level of 137 million in classes I to VIII (in 1990) might not be feasible due to socio-economic reasons and other factors".[3] Obviously then, these reasons, reasons that are inherent in the path of development, cannot be tackled by the planners or framers of the policy perspective.

What happens then, to the Planning Commission's second objective, the "eradication of illiteracy in the age-group 15-35 years" ? At 2 per cent growth rate, the population in the age-group 15-19 (that is the group which could reach class VIII during 1985-90) would be about 66 million, and about 250 million in the age-group 15-35. Assuming even a one-per-cent fall in the drop-out rate, at the Planning Commission's projected rate of growth in enrolment, not more than 33 million will become literate by education upto class VIII. So, half of those aged 15 to 19, the new entrants to the world of youth, will either remain illiterate or have only a "smattering of literacy". How much the non-formal education system or "distance" education can help in actually delivering the goods is only a matter of conjecture. Even the

Planning Commission has not offered any estimate so far.

Search for Quality

Improvement in the quality of education can, then, relate only to those who are actually participating in the system of education. Then comes the question : what quality for whom at which level in the formal system ? *Challenge* has no understandable or consistent answer to that question. Certainly "It is difficult to define quality", but talking about it can mean little unless at least some idea is formed about what it should mean to the individual concerned and the society at the given stage of development. A number of attributes have been listed in the document. "A quality conscious system would produce people who have the attributes of functional and social relevance, mental agility and physical dexterity, efficacy and reliability, and, above all, the confidence and experiment with new situations. To these personal attributes, one could add the dimensions of a value system conducive to harmony, integration and welfare of the weak and the disadvantaged".

Who again are these people ? Those who have received higher education, or those who have done only upto the higher secondary level, (including those having obtained vocational education) ? That they do not include those who have got only elementary education, is clear from the observation that "The role of elementary education, is to fulfil, "the basic objective of nurturing national pride and integration and cultural cohesion, and internalization of democratic values". When it comes to secondary education, what has been sought as the optimum, is "competence in mathematics and science" (since that "is likely to be crucial to everyone in the coming decades") and "enforcement of discipline, acceptance of duties set forth in Part IV of the Constitution, and a minimal capacity for innovation, articulation and participation in production."

As regards higher education, there is nothing in the document to indicate what role is expected from the desired improvement in quality, though observations interspersed in the document embody some implications. About the education system as a whole, it has been said that "The system is expected to generate new knowledge in all fields within the reach of the human mind. In addition, it has to evolve principles, methodologies and guidelines for the application of knowledge for benefitting the society. It is also expected to provide knowledge and skills for the problems of development".

Application of knowledge is possible only when there is a perceived necessity of such application. And new knowledge is acquired only within a framework of interaction between the exact content of that knowledge and its logical use over a period of time. So, one cannot keep one's eyes closed to the levels of the productive forces and the structure of their use that together determine the necessity for the acquisition of knowledge and its application. The document recognises that "The linkage of technical education with manpower planning has remained weak although this is one area where the need

for strong linkages is obvious". It also refers to the feeling that "The products of IITs are geared more to the requirements of the international technology market rather than to India's own needs for development". But there it stops.

What have the products of the vocational stream at the secondary level achieved ? If their technical/professional education was supposed to be in tune with the growth in demand for the related skills, then why have these diploma holders remained largely employed ? Here too, *Challenge* refers to "the failure of vocational stream" as "the result of poor linkages between it and industry or opportunities for self-employment". If the vocational stream offers, as the document says, "neither a reasonable chance of worthwhile employment nor any advantage in moving upwards into a professional or general programme of education", then what qualitative improvement can ever be visualised ? Besides, what precisely is the quality that is or should be, expected ? The IITs were established for imparting technical instructions of a higher level than at the Regional Engineering Colleges. Today, about two lakh take the Joint Entrance Examination every year for 8000 seats in the IITs. If the state (including the public sector) and big business together cannot absorb this small number, then attention should be paid first to what has been happening to "India's own needs for development".

Surprisingly, the delinking of degrees from jobs is being viewed as a panacea, despite this experience. *Challenge* visualises "considerable relief from the pressure of numbers in the undergraduate stream in case avenues for training with a reasonable assurance of getting jobs are provided on a large scale in close collaboration with employers". Training in which skill ? Collaboration with which section of employers ? If these are jobs like television repair and servicing, operating a mini-computer or its servicing, and the like, then some employment potentiality might be there for a few years to come. But how far can the services sector grow without a corresponding growth in the two major productive sectors ?

In fact, vocationalisation appears to have been accepted as a *faith*, and like all other faith, it has come to stand solely on the willingness of the faithful. It attains comical heights when general undergraduate courses are sought to be reformed via diversification of a novel kind. A student, it is suggested, should "be able to graduate with modules pertaining to political theory, public administration, mathematics and word processing." The targetted or the actual function that such a module will perform has not been explained. Perhaps the idea is that if the graduate cannot get any other job, even that of a mathematics teacher in a middle school, he should be able to apply for the job of a word processor operator. His study of political theory should then be for a purpose other than the one for study of mathematics. And his study of either of the two can have nothing to do with his vocational training as a word processor operator. Unless, of course, the non-vocational part is for general awareness.

Science education is inadequate for a variety of reasons, of which the for-

mal curricula is only one. It is widely recognised that science courses at the secondary/higher secondary level are based on the conventional compartmentalisation between physics, chemistry, and biology. As a result, scientific consciousness is seriously constricted at the relevant age of the student. The student's study of environment in his biology course, for example, remains isolated from the chemistry of environment or from the elementaries of physics. Scientific thinking, including the essential perception of inter-relationships between various processes in the world of matter and the social relations, becomes the first casuality. Similarly, motion is discussed with the help of calculus at a stage when the student's course in mathematics does not require learning of calculus. The student remains oblivious of the understanding that calculus is best understood in its real-life application through the study of motion.

At the college and university levels, courses are designed "essentially to explain concepts and basic principles at various levels of abstraction". Lack of equipments and materials or an adverse student-teacher ratio is certainly the immediate reason. Universities and advanced study centres in science have nearly accomplished a division of labour between abstract conceptualisation and applied research. It is the state's science policy and policy of allocation to higher levels of science education that lie at its root. That, in turn, is determined by the structure of technology in use at any time, and the one that comes to be preferred for the foreseeable future. And it is here that the entire range of issues beginning from investment-mix or demand composition to the composition of products or income distribution, enters the scene in a big way. "India's own needs for development" cannot be understood in isolation from this wide set of interconnections.

What, therefore, strikes one as increasing unemployment—with or without its relationship with the 'quality' of science education—among science and technology graduates, is the product of the lack of relevance in more senses than one. Ultimately, it is a question of relevance to the economy, its process of production and exchange, and thereby to those who dominate the structure of control over the means of production. Such a framework of relations, at its more generalised level, is the framework of *class* relations. In its generalised form, it may appear as an oversimplification,—mechanistic and 'deterministic' to the complacent liberal—but, the specificities of such relations can be identified in everyday experience, as also in empirical investigation. In essence, therefore, it is the class relations which determine the *required* quality of science and technology education, as also the creation of conditions for the achievement of that required quality.

How far can the question of quantitative expansion of education be isolated from these conditions ? To put it somewhat naively, higher education for a tiny minority, based on the principle of 'merit', without any equality of opportunities, is necessarily adverse to the achievement of the optimum quality that the society is capable of producing. Enrolment becomes subjected to selection and elimination at two levels : one within the economic and social, mainly economic relations; and another the formal sys-

tem of education. The clearest manifestation of the former is the high incidence of child labour when it pulls down the retention rate at the elementary stage of education. At the secondary level, retention becomes a function mainly of the household's cost of education relative to its income, and the physical access to the school. Performance in terms of learning is determined by a number of factors. Important among them are : the level of nutrition of the student; availability of books, etc; the family environment as an input to learning incentive; and the student's recognition of where and how he can apply what he has learnt. Within the formal system, resources, school environment, the quality of teaching and the examination system are the main factors.

Merit, then is not absolutely determined at the level of genetics. In a class society, it has a generalised correlation with the hierarchy of class relations, and a specified relationship with the occupation pattern and the structure of income distribution. The performance of a poor student is often less meritorious and therefore, he is shut out from the merit-based formal system. At the stage where he ends his formal education, he receives a less useful division, and thereafter he becomes one of the "less equals" in the competition for employment. It was an American professor who said about public schools in the early sixties, that "in the schools of modern America we still find that children from 'comfortless cabins', or to shift time and locale, from 'urban slums' cannot compete with the children of the elite. This is true not necessarily because of any deficiency of talent or ability but because society being dominated by elites has given their children a head start and, following the lead as always, the schools have compounded the advantage by providing them with superior educational services of every conceivable variety".[5] About the other haven of capitalism, England, Martin Mayer says that selection by social class leads to differentiation between two types of high schools : one "where two-thirds or more of the kids are college-bound", and another, in "wretched slums, where no more than a handful of kids have even considered the possibility of college education, and the academic options are severely restricted".[6]

Coming to higher education,—and one has to underline here that not more than 4.5 per cent of the age-specific population has ever reached a college or a university department—the same set of factors continue to operate in determining retention and performance. But, a substantial proportion of students who could have made the best use of the highest level of available educational resources, (if the society and the educational system had given them the necessary opportunity) have not reached this level at all.[7] Those who arrive, are obviously not equal. And the formal system introduces the widest variety of differences among them. The higher the market price of a specialisation, the greater the rôle of 'merit' in selection and elimination. And the 'status' of an institution or a subject is ultimately influenced by that market price. Allocation of resources, too, follows the same criterion. The wide variation in expenditure per student in different disciplines, institutions, and types of institutions by level (under-graduated

and post-gratuate, a college in a city and one in a small town or the like), more due to this than the differences in the cost of necessary resources.

When a trend in the price of a particular specialisation/skill changes, even reversed, in the short run, the consequent change in the enrolment pattern becomes a further constraint on the pursuit of quality. A higher secondary science student, for example, seeks admission to undergraduate commerce course, not because he loves the subject but because the Banking Services Recuitment Board or business houses can recruit more men and with a higher salary than what the CSIR, the industry, or the educational insitutions have to offer to science graduates. Again, what pursuit of quality is being inspired, when an IIT graduate knows that he may have to sit for the IAS examination and, if successful, spend a good part of his working life as a Block Development Officer or the like ?

Reform of education with improvement of quality,therefore, is not just a matter of changing the nuts and bolts within the formal system of education. In any case, the first need is to ensure increasing reconciliation between quantitative expansion and upgrading of the content of education. For the latter, of course, the perception of the necessity for a changed quality, by the state and the classes which control state power, is essential. A system of education that is free from any irrelevance of its products, can only be one which is simultaneously *democratic* in terms of availability of opportunities, and *scientific* in terms of the skill knowledge it imparts and the consciousness it inculcates.[8]

The Desperate Recipe

Challenge cannot see that. It can see, on the other hand, that a thousand million people of India, "will be committed to the noble principles enshrined in our Constitution, with the goal of equality of status and of opportunity providing a major thrust for action". When it says that "There is in the country a new confidence and a new enthusiasm", it obviously refers to the new enthusiasm for 'liberalising' the economy towards a closer collaboration with international monopoly capital, via faster import of technology for a further change in the composition of products in tune with, or to strengthen, the present disparities in income. All that can go well with 'information and communication revolution', and the expedition to the '21st century', but cannot reform education in the interests of the people.

On the contrary, a crude and a more exploitative concept of productivity has come to dominate the state's allocation priorities. Leave alone any real increase in state expenditure on education, even the present ratio—to total public expenditure or to GNP—is hardly adequate. The reasons for this are not unfathomable. Upto the third plan, the necessary level of technical knowledge and its application was more clearly visible, particularly due to the choice of the technology-mix of that period and the state's emphasis on self-reliance in technical know-how. Expansion of education too was deemed necessary. Partly because of the peoples' aspirations raised during the national movement, and equally, if not more, because of the

requirements of the production process including those for the expansion of the state apparatus. The next two decades saw a deceleration in the growth of education, and a consequent adjustment in the pattern of allocation on education. The 'wasteful' nature of public expenditure on education came under increasing attention in some academic cost-benefit analyses, and uniformly in official pronouncements. The search for quality became increasingly limited and burdened by undefinable goals when it came to official propaganda. The "large numbers" became the villain of the piece.

Then came the 'new' economic policy of liberalisation. At the production end, it envisages import-based renovation of technology, and a product-mix that is more pragmatic by its marketability in a limited domestic and a more limited international market. The creation or application of new knowledge within the country is of little relevance to such a structure.

At one end, in terms of its distributive implications it has to rely on an allocation policy which keeps public expenditure within 'safe' limits. The emphasis on privatisation arises out of this compulsion. "Human resources" or "human capital formation" has to be left to the whims of the market. Not by income-based multiple-pricing of education, but by further differentiating education in terms of its demand in the employment market.

Its ultimate effect has to be more adverse for the poorer sections and the middle income groups. Contraction of educational opportunities is the necessary consequence. In terms of enrolment, it can only mean (a) lower growth rate in all the three sectors of formal education; (b) drastic cut in expenditure per student in secondary and higher education; (c) more rigorous application of the 'merit' principle in the institutions of higher education; and (d) further concentration of higher education, (mainly by drastically raising the private cost of education).

But faced with a compelling demystification, ideology does not give up the effort to hide its real character. It has to, therefore, try to appear value-free by putting on a technocratic apparel. Administrative restructuring must be emphasised as more important. Non-issues or fringe issues have to be posed as the major problems. Symptoms have been identified as the disease. Campus casteism, student unrest, 'politics' in the campus in general, and "lack of discipline" among teachers, have become the crucial targets of reform. The remedy suggested, is of course, not without a method. A committee of the University Grants Commission (UGC) suggests concentration of powers of appointment in the central universities in the hands of the UGC itself, and the rest of the powers in the Vice-Chancellor. *Challenge* goes all out to suggest eradication of 'politics' from the campus, and of whatever little participation teachers make today in the organisation of education in some universities. Delinking undergraduate education completely from the university structure, and bringing it under an autonomous board (like the Board of Secondary Education) is another recipe suggested. Elsewhere, it suggests decentralisation to encourage private enterprise in education. Not, of course, a democratic decentralisation, but a structure where the education system remains accountable to the local 'community'. The 'community' apparently

means those who pay as entrepreneurs of education.

Whether the correlation of class forces will permit all the reform that has been suggested, is however, an important question. The democratic aspirations for education cannot be wholly suppressed without paying its political cost. Whether the ruling party or the ruling classes can afford, or are willing, to pay that cost is a big question. But the preferences are evident, as are the many compulsions created by the 'new' economic policy. That exactly, is the crux of the crisis in which the ruling classes have been caught. The crisis in the education system is best understood in this background. The challenge is not just 'of education'. The root lies elsewhere.

1 Sources of figures cited under *Universal Elementary Education* have been cited in the text, unless otherwise mentioned References or extracts from *Challenge of Education*, Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1985, are from the first mimeographed version and not from the printed one Page numbers have not been mentioned since those do not appear necessary.

2 *Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90*, Vol II, Planning Commission, New Delhi.

3 *Ibid*

4 "Whether we choose to call it pure or applied, the story of science is not something apart from the common life of mankind. What we call pure science only thrives when the contemporary social structure is capable of making full use of its teaching, furnishing it with new problems for solution and equipping it with new instruments for solving them." Lancelot Hogben, *Science for the Citizen*, (Fourth Edition), 1966, p 11

5 Kenneth B Clark in Patricia Sexton, *Education and Income · Inequalities of Opportunities in Our Public Schools*, 1961, p. ix.

6 *The Schools*, 1961, p. 304

7 Of every 100 children born in say, 1961, 80 joined class I in 1967 Of them, 39 went up to class VIII in 1974; 24 went up to class XI in 1977; and only 4 went up to the university level thereafter

8 As a matter of fact, it is almost impossible to separate the scientific part of the consciousness from the democratic part, if one takes 'democratic' to mean in the interest of the people, in non-class terms.

K.K. THECKEDATH *

Challenge of Education—An Exercise in Evasion

SO FAR AS pronouncements on education are concerned, the Constitution of India, the Kothari Commission recommendations and the present document, "The Challenge of Education", represent three stages in the developing crisis in the Indian economy. With the coming of independence and the opening of the Indian markets there was optimism of growth and development, and hence the Constitution laid down the articles on education up to the age of fourteen and the protection of youth and tender childhood from exploitation.

The specific conditions created by the rulers in the country, where land concentration remained and the overwhelming majority of the rural people were steeped in poverty, naturally acted as break on the expansion of the market. The signs of the post independence crisis in the form of underutilisation of capacity and growing unemployment of people gave its colour to the picture painted by the Kothari Commission. The Kothari Commission gave the first signal for reduction of education, for siphoning off of young people at the stage of Xth standard, for streamlining of education, for reducing the degree courses from a four-year programme to a three-year programme.

Now, with the further deepening of the crisis with registered unemployment touching the all time high of 30 million, *The Challenge of Education* is visualised in an open refusal to implement the constitutional directive on education.

I would add to these prefatory remarks the observation that the present document fails to make any clear statement about the line to be adopted on most matters but merely throws up suggestions which may be interpreted one way or another. It is on such slippery ground that we have to find our way and understand wh it is in the minds of the rulers. Euphemistically, it has been described as an open ended document.

Plea for Giving up the Constitutional Obligation

I combed the document with a microscope but failed to find anywhere any statement of the constitutional obligation. Though, Article 45 is mentioned and words like universalisation of elementary education, accessibility,

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etc., are used, the document carefully avoids stating the actual constitutional commitment. This is certainly no casual omission, it is part of a design to make people forget that in 1950 certain guarantees were given, so that the rulers are now able to slip out of constitutional obligations.

What does Article 45 say? I quote this short statement:

"45. The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years."

Again Article 39 states in section (e)

"that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or their strength;"

These were not phrases and passages included in the Constitution to embellish it, but were expressions of the aspirations of the people who laid down their lives for freedom. The importance of education in the eyes of our people is seen from that fact that of all the directive principles, Article 45 is the only one which stipulates a time limit of ten years for its implementation.

The major thrust of the Article is contained in the words *free* and *compulsory*, for *all children*, until they *complete the age of fourteen*. It is precisely these commitments that the present authors want to sweep under the carpet. In the entire document there is no reference at all to *compulsory education*, and the document dishonestly hides the commitment of education until children complete the age of fourteen, by referring to universalisation, elementary education, primary and middle education, various patterns obtaining in the country with elementary education taking up 4+3 years, etc. The idea is to dilute the content of Article 45, to replace compulsory education by universal education through various patterns where the input would be reduced to education up to the age of 12 or 13 (five years plus 4 plus 3).

Fate of Elementary Education

Section after section of the document lists the shortfalls in the government's attempts to 'universalise' education. The drop-out rate of 77 per cent between Class I and Class VIII is admitted, as also is admitted the fact that even enrolment at Class I is far from total. It is admitted that in several regions the enrolment of girls is less than 20 per cent. It is also admitted that the per student expenditure on primary education has declined in real terms over the years. But what is the remedy? Is there a promise that this would be rectified, that more investment will take place in education?

The document states that educational planning can only take place within the tight constraints of resources. They further warn us that while deciding the issues, "alternative scenarios have to be considered in the light of constraints not only of financial resources but also the political (sic), social, cultural and organisational milieu".

So what do these constraints dictate for elementrary education ? This is what they argue :

"Assuming that universal elementary education is achieved by 1990, out of a total age-specific population of 17.4 crores, 11 crores pupils should be at the primary stage and the remaining 6.4 crores in the middle stage. It may be noted that this achievement implies that primary education will be 1.5 times and middle education will be 3.2 times its present size. Such an expansion will have a significant impact on the educational expenditure as well. It is estimated that in terms of 1980-81 prices, and assuming the per unit costs of 1977-78 to stay put, the budgetary requirements for the year 1990-91 will be doubled to Rs. 3200 crores (the 1980-81 expenditure being Rs. 1537 crores). On the basis of 8 per cent per annum rate of inflation the budget in current prices would be more than four times the 1980-81 allocations. In 1981, the number of teachers engaged in elementary education was 21.7 lakhs. At the existing pattern of educational development, their number will be 29 lakhs by 1990. However, if universalisation of elementary education is achieved by 1990, the total requirement of teachers for elementary education would increase to 44 lakhs."

It is admitted that universalisation of elementary education would mean increased enrolment in schools and colleges. If we remembr the projections of the Fifth Five Year Plan, it was expected that enrolment in higher education would go to 45 lakhs by 1985. The present enrolment figures are only 31 lakhs. Universalisation of elementary education would mean that the projection of 1966 would prove to be correct.

But this is exactly what the rulers do not want and cannot digest. This elaborate argument is wound up with the statement that because of the multiplier effect on enrolments in the schools and colleges and the increased budget, *"policy deliberation vis-a-vis universalisation of elementary education need to be matched with hard financial decisions".*

Simply put, it means if you implement the commitment in the Constitution of getting all the children into the schools, it would also imply that more children would come to schools and colleges which also the rulers cannot bear. Never before have arguments been placed so shamelessly for evading constitutional obligations. The document *The Challenge of Education* is an exercise in evasion, befuddling and obfuscation.

The way out suggested is through *angan wadis.* As the word *angan* signifies, we are supposed to give up even the plea for school buildings. It is admitted that as many as 89 per cent of primary schools, 70 per cent of middle schools, 27 per cent of secondary schools and 10 per cent of higher secondary schools in rural areas do not have urinal/lavatory facilities. The framers of this document try to remedy this situation by the *angan wadis* where there are also no buildings. The *angans* are used for keeping children together to be tended by older children. At one stroke they not only solve the problem of schools without facilities, they also solve the problem of appointing qualified teachers and paying them proper scales. Older girls who have to look after

their siblings in any case would now act as managers of these *angan wadis.*

What is the proportion of children to be covered by this non-formal set up. The staggering figure of 3.9 crores of children are expected to go through non-formal education in the next decade, which means these are the children who will not be in a position to go through regular schools.

Constitutional Promise

The question we should consider seriously is whether the rulers should be given an alibi for jettisoning the directive principle. Historically, the majority of the intellectuals have played the role of legitimisers of the existing systems, first of the British rule and then of the capitalist-landlord rule. The tragedy is that the intellectuals internalise the system so much that they believe that the crisis of the rulers is to act as parameters restricting their own thinking.

The time has come for us to say that we shall not allow the rulers to give up the commitment of free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen. If this implies a budgetary allocation of Rs. 6000 crores, then that amount has to be found. Political and other constraints of the rulers should not be allowed as an excuse for giving up this commitment and replacing it by the new proposals.

In fact, to make compulsory education a reality in our country where 50 per cent of the people are below the poverty line, it should be ensured that two meals are provided in every rural elementary school every working day, once when the school starts in the morning and once at the close of school. Mothers will force their children to attend school at least for the meals that are ensured. The cost for this arrangement would work out to less than Rs. 4000 crores in the yearly budget. But the result of investing this amount would be that the base of elementary education would be immediately enlarged.

Thus a total input of Rs. 10,000 crores has to be made. The present Rs. 1,537 crores had been universally admitted as grossly inadequate. Even the Kothari Commission had recommended an input of 6 per cent of the GNP in education. The teachers' movement in the country has been demanding an allocation of 10 per cent for education.

The document makes fun of the mid-day meals programmes of some state governments and says that they have failed to deliver the goods. In fact there is a powerful lobby in the press which is also denigrating serious attempts to increase the welfare of the people and they are describing these as populist measures. They are only echoing the fears of the rulers who do not want people to crystallise clear and rational demands. But today even to ask for the implementation of the constitutional promises are made out to be irrational. What needs to be done is that the programmes of mid-day meals, free uniforms, etc., of the state governments are strengthened by converting them into two meals programmes to ensure that all children are covered in the educational process.

All Round Curtailment Visualised

The siphoning off process which was started in 1968 by the 10 + 2 + 3 pattern, now will be further intensified by the proposal to have students come out at the VIII Standard level. The experience of the 10 + 2 +3 pattern is that while students were expected to branch off at the X Standard level into vocational courses, there were no provisions for vocational education. There were admittedly only 550 institutes for nine states in the country, and there were only 134 polytechnics for twenty states in the country.

In spite of this dismal record of vocationalisation, like the Bourbons who never forget anything and never learn anything, the rulers are once again talking of vocationalisation at VIII stage. But there is a method in the madness. For, if the only purpose is to siphon off young people, whether there are alternative avenues for education or not is not a serious problem. For the teachers and for all concerned with education, this means a grave threat to the continuing of even the minimum educational facilities available.

A New Pattern

At the level of higher education also there is a new pattern suggested. The North Eastern Hill University is held up as an example. Instead of the three year degree it is suggested that there should be a two year degree. Let the colleges have an honours course for those students who get 45 per cent marks and above, and even here only those colleges who prove that they are better colleges should have this facility. This means that most of the colleges in the country would close their last year batches, and deal only with the teaching for two year degrees.

Teachers in the state of Maharashtra who are still smarting under the effects of replacing the four year degree by a three year degree will know what such a proposal would mean with regard to the security of jobs of teachers. But what is more important is the attempt to devalue degrees. A specious argument is made that we are producing unemployable graduates. Statistics of unemployed graduates are cited to prove that the graduates that we produce are unemployable. If the Indian doctors and engineers working abroad were to return to our country, they should also be unemployed. Would they immediately become employable ? Strange are the arguments of educational planners who sit in the ministries of finance to do their thinking.

Moratorium on Opening of Universities and Colleges

Once we accept that we are producing unemployable graduates, it becomes easy to accept the next proposition that there should be no more new colleges, no more new universities. This is a dangerous argument, and many people are misled by such arguments. Recently there was a meeting of the Education Ministers at Delhi. Surprisingly even the Education Ministers from states like Andhra and Karnataka supported the idea of a moratorium on opening of colleges and universities. The only two state governments which refused to accept this proposition were Tripura and West Bengal.

Let us consider the question of Bombay University. It has reached a state when for proper functioning it has to be divided into at least two universities. A new university in Konkan is long overdue, and there is no reason why the colleges in Goa should not have a separate university to look after them. If the moratorium comes what will happen ? The needs of a developing nation dictate the opening of new colleges and new universities. No matter how desperate the rulers may be to turn the clock back and to jettison earlier commitments, we cannot accept the proposition of a moratorium because that would be against the interests of the people.

Capitation Fees and the Elitist Bias

While there is, on the one hand, a drive to devalue all education from the primary to the higher levels by such proposals as *angan wadis* to replace regular schools and two year degrees to replace the three year degrees, there is on the other hand the recognition that centres of better quality education should also be established. The framers of the document realise that everyone cannot be deprived of good standard education, for in that case what will happen to the children of the bureaucrats, the capitalists and the rural rich ?

Further, with the economy being geared more and more, under the pressure of the multinationals, to the slogan of producing for export, the rulers see the need for high level sophisticated technology in all spheres of production. The drive towards automation and the introduction of computers is a side result of this linkage of the economy to the foreign market. Import of high level computers and other kinds of automation implies the production of a skilled man power to operate these. Just as Macualay visualised the need for producing *babus*, the framers of the present document see the need for producing a limited quantity of computer boys.

It is in this background that we should see the emphasis on the pace-setting Doon type schools, one in each district, which will have a computer, and the institutes of excellence to be established on the initiative of private individuals. The elitist bias is clear from the *open justification of capitation fee* in these institutions. The document quotes approvingly a body of opinion *"that these institutions may be allowed to continue provided they would place 25 to 50 per cent of the seats at the disposal of the government for admission on merit without payment of capitation fees."* (para 4.89)

To place 25 to 50 per cent of the seats at the disposal of the government for merit based admission means to keep 50 to 75 per cent of the seats for those who can pay the huge capitation fees. This is reservation of seats for the rich. The whole thrust of capitation institutions is that they in effect reserve the major chunk for the admission to the rural and city rich, and leave a few seats for the vast majority of meritorious children of the poor to compete for. This is elitism in a crude form.

The proposal to delink degrees from jobs is yet another way of reserving jobs for those who can pay. Because once we delink the degree, any pretence of jobs being given to the meritorious will have to be given up. Corruption

will grow further in the appointment of candidates to jobs. The on-money for jobs which we see in many states will become the general pattern for getting any job. The rich will be able to corner the better jobs and the poor will have to find their way into the lower rungs of the job hierarchy.

Privatisation of Education

The task of establishing such centres and institutions is to be given more and more to private agencies. The moratorium on the opening of universities and colleges is to be combined with the provision of privatisation of educational institutions.

What is the record of private institutions in the country ? They are commercial centres financed by the government, run for the private gain of a few who own them and run them very often arbitrarily without any accountability either to the government which pays or to society on whose munificent donations they were started in the first place. Take the example of a private college which is at a stone's throw from here.

The total money turnover in this college is around Rs. 46 lakhs per year. The fees collected amounts to Rs. 6 lakhs. The remaining Rs. 40 lakhs comes from the government in the form of grants. What accountability does this institution have ? It flouts even simple rules regarding appointment of teachers and continuation of superannuated persons as principals. It does not have any democratic machinery to go into the finances and the handling of money. The institution regularly invites high members of the judiciary for various types of functions and sends them gifts with the sole aim of influencing them on the various matters that are likely to come up in court.

As a minority institution, it has challenged the setting up of even a machinery to go into the grievances of the teachers. The private colleges refuse even to keep their contractual commitments to their own teachers. Gratuity, which was a contractual obligation, has not been paid to the teachers of private colleges. Even salaries are often not paid until government grants are received. The contract of appointing a teacher implies that salaries have to be paid irrespective of what arrangement the institution has with the government regarding grants. Today there are over 500 teachers in private colleges in Bombay who have not received their salaries from June 1985. Most of the institutions claim minority status and quote Article 30 (1) to throw out teachers.

This is the record of private management in higher education. It is also the record in other private educational institutions. The government pays but the managements retain the right to hire and fire, to use and misuse funds, to bestow favours and to flout directions and provisions in the Acts.

The teachers' movement in the country has been demanding an end to private ownership of institutions of learning. The AIFUCTO has demanded the universitisation of all colleges and their conversion into constituent colleges of the universities with a democratic structure of management. The document *Challenge of Education* is blissfully ignorant of this situation. It talks

of handing over of more institutions to the care of private managements. This is one of the most dangerous propositions in this document.

Fee Increase Mooted

The document also suggests an overall increase in fees. While justifying capitation fees, the document goes further and says that fees should be increased, and for those who are poor there should be scholarships. The document does not care to quantify poverty for establishing norms of giving scholarships. The result would be the hiking of the fees, thereby contributing further to the drop out from the institutions of education.

The 10 + 2 + 3 pattern has resulted in a steep drop in the enrolment at the university level. In backward areas like Marathwada in Maharashtra, the drop is even more pronounced. Many colleges have been depleted of student strength. These have been termed as unviable colleges. The document proposes the closing down of all such colleges. There will soon be a proposal to close down unviable subjects, that is subjects where the number of students is below say 20 at the degree level. These dangerous proposals will be complimenting the drive to curtail education through this fee rise. The entire democratic movement in the country has to take this up as a challenge and build up resistance to fee increase and the closure of the so-called unviable institutions.

Depoliticisation

The rulers well know that these proposals are going to meet stiff resistance from the people and their representatives in the elected bodies at the university. The recent past is replete with examples of brave struggles of teachers and students and parents against undemocratic moves in the field of education. In Maharashtra, we launched a powerful united struggle against a highly undemocratic University Act.

The framers of the document dub this as political manoeuvring. The cry for depoliticising education is to be seen in this context. It is not that the rulers want to keep politics away from education. I have already quoted the section in the document where they admit that in planning for education they have to keep in mind their political constraints.

The Education Minister at the centre and in every state is a political person, a member of a political party. The presiding authority in every university, the Chancellor, is very often a retired politician, and sometimes, as was seen in the episode of the dismissal of the Andhra Ministry, a person not fully retired from politics. Under these conditions, what does the call for depoliticisation mean ? It only means that the increasing united struggles of the teachers and the students for their just demands have to be checked. Every serious teacher who sees that protest has to be registered against the wrong policies of the authorities becomes a persona-non grata. Such teachers are to be curbed. This is the only meaning of depoliticisation. Teachers' democratic rights as well as the rights of employees and students are to be res-

tricted through legislation. At present, the university bodies as well as the local managing bodies are heavily weighted against the employees. While there are provisions for elected representatives of donors, there is no provision for elected representatives of the employees or students in the Senates of most universities.

Calcutta University and other universities in West Bengal are honourable exceptions and they have a quantum of elected representatives from trade unions, peasant organisations, etc. Universities should reflect the aspirations of the common people. This can be achieved only through the process of democratisation of their entire structure. While the rulers want to restrict democracy under the plea for depoliticisation, the common people should aggressively fight for democratisation of all educational institutions.

We may sum up our recommendations as follows :

(1) Implement the constitutional commitment of compulsory and free education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years. We shall not allow the rulers to evade this responsibility.

(2) Increase the inputs into education. A minimum of 10 per cent of the Gross National Product should go into educational development.

(3) Delink education and the economy from the dictates of the foreign agencies like the World Bank and IMF which suggest streamlining expenditure on public services, greater restriction of those working in these sectors, and also suggest greater automation and computerisation.

(4) Expand educational facilities at all levels from primary to university. No moratorium on opening of educational institutions. Give greater facilities to students in the form of two meals at elementary levels, free books, uniforms, extended facilities of freeships and scholarships As a first step, make education free up to Standard XII in all states.

(5) Greater inputs into vocationalisation, stop capitation fees. Admissions to be purely on merit with special training facilities to students coming from backward class and scheduled caste backgrounds to compete as equals. Reservation of seats for BC and SC students to continue until these facilities are fully developed.

(6) Ending of the private sector in the field of education and handing over all educational institutions to democratically set up public agencies. All colleges to be converted into constituent colleges of the university with full democratic rights for teachers, students and employees.

(7) Drop the dual educational system of two streams, one for the common man and the other for the elite. A single school system and a single system of higher education in the country.

(8) Non formal education and distance education to be made as a supplementary programme to strengthen the present system of education and not as a substitute education for the poor.

(9) Guarantee jobs to all students who pass out, and immediately announce unemployment allowance for all students who are unable to get jobs after education.

(10) Full job protection to teachers, proper scales and other facilities for improvement of their living conditions and their effectiveness.

(11) A simultaneous promulgation of codes of conduct for teachers and managers in education to be formulated democratically and to be accepted voluntarily by all the parties.

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Non-formal Education in the New Education Policy

AT PRESENT, a lot is being said on new education policy though its various features have not yet been spelt out concretely. Available information on education indicates that the state of education in India, whether at the primary, secondary or higher level, is deplorable. Despite the constitutional directive, free and compulsory education to children between 6-14 years is a far cry. There are large drop-out ratios at every stage of education. A large number of schools lack even the basic facilities like buildings, teachers, blackboards, drinking water, toilets, etc. The state of our higher education is worse. These are facts which have been accepted by our educational planners. However, despite the extremely low base of primary and secondary education and the very low rate of participation in higher education (the proportion of students enrolled in higher education to the population in the relevant age-group, i.e., 17-23 years, is only 4.8 per cent), the educational managers in India continue to follow the policy of restricting education, specially at the higher level, and the government has been spending less and less, in relative terms, on education. In fact, the architects of our education policy admit that "...any substantial improvement in educational coverage as well as retention, which constitutes the core of universalisation of elementary education efforts, will not only require significant increase in educational expenditure on elementary education but will also have a *multiplier effect on the total educational budget through increased enrolments in* the secondary and higher education. Hence, policy deliberations vis-a-vis universalisation of elementary education need to be matched with hard financial decisions." (*Challenge of Education*, page 88, 4.64). In the context of 'hard financial decisions', the very next para (4.65) is quite revealing. "Alternatively, other educational approaches, such as non-formal/distance education, and vocationalisation have to be worked out in detail for a large scale implementation, and replication."

Thus, it is clear that faced with pressure of democratic demand for education (particularly higher education, the narrow base of our education pyramid notwithstanding), which is reflected in the scramble for admissions every year, our educational managers take shelter behind the argument of paucity of resources for this stupendous task and justify the policy of restricting education on the one hand and talk of 'alternative educational approaches' (such as non-formal/distance education) on the other. Understandably, they do not highlight the low-cost aspect of these alternative

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educational approaches, while stressing vigorously 'the promise of new educational initiatives' in view of the 'large network of television and radio stations'. While justifying the diversion of the overflow from the regular educational channels to the non-formal channels of education at all levels, they explain how the new educational technology can 'revolutionise the teaching-learning system by enriching formal education and also by supporting non-formal education as well as the distance learning systems'. While doing all this, they completely ignore the well-accepted fact that the two kinds of education imparted through formal and non-formal channels respectively, are not comparable commodities.

In view of the above, the purpose of this paper is to establish the following points :

1) Non-formal or Distance Education, though necessary for particular sections of learners who cannot avail of formal educational channels, is *not* a substitute for initial education;

2) even in the case of genuine distance learners, there is a strong academic case for integration of distance education with the mainstream while the separation of the two, apart from academic lacuna, is fraught with serious political consequences in a democratic polity;

3) integration of distance education with the mainstream, accompanied by the emergence of a full-fledged department of educational methodology, will lead to research in applied educational sciences and, in turn, increase the intake of regular educational institutions through optimum combination of educational inputs, thus taking care of the problem of resources to some extent.

For this, it is first necessary to explain the real purpose of non-formal distance education and also the background of British Open University—one of the premier institutions of non-formal education. As far as the purpose of distance education is concerned, it is to bring into the fold of education those who, for various reasons, lost their initial chance of receiving it or those who need it as a life-long process. It is certainly not meant to keep students clamouring for initial higher education at a 'distance' from the mainstream, with a view to protecting and perpetuating elitism in education.

In Britain, the conventional universities refused to own the responsibility of distance education and this led to the establishment of the Open University, away from the mainstream of higher education. Following this example, many other countries have already established (and some are in the process of establishing) separate universities or institutions for distance teaching, primarily with a view to keeping claimants of initial higher education away from the mainstream and thus preserving the elitist citadel of conventional universities. The establishment of such separate institutions for distance education has created and perpetuated a kind of dichotomy in the sphere of higher education which has proved to be the biggest hurdle for the development of optimum teaching methodologies.

Away From Mainstream Education

While studying the nature and implications of distance education in India, the first name that comes to mind is the British Open University which is regarded as the model of distance education and whose 'success' is often quoted as an argument for establishing similar institutions in various parts of the world.

From the need for constant updating and refreshing of knowledge, because of rapid technological and social developments, emerged new concepts like 'education permanente', 'recurrent education' and 'continuing education'. As a consequence of all this, the demand for higher education, both regular and part-time, increased phenomenally.

Under pressure of high popular demand for educational opportunities and recommendations of various committees and commissions, there was considerable expansion of initial higher education through opening of new colleges and universities in U.K. But this expansion was accepted quite grudgingly and actual facilities did not increase in proportion to the increase in numbers. A lot of hue and cry was raised over the 'deterioration in standards' which in fact meant an erosion in the elitist character of higher education. Statements like 'more is worse' were made by the elite and universities were described as 'diploma mills', all this in order to condemn and stop the expansion in higher education.

In contrast to the expansion, though inadequate and accepted grudgingly, of initial higher education, nothing was seriously done to take care of the demand for higher education on a part-time basis (i.e., demand for a second chance and for continuing education). Before the establishment of Open University, some people had raised the very pertinent question as to why part-time adult education could not be undertaken by the established universities as part of their teaching programmes. The attitude of the established universities was most conservative and arrogant in this regard. "The overriding view in the academic community was that this problem (of distance education) did not concern them; it ought to concern somebody else."[1]

The academics in the established universities ridiculed the very idea of teaching without class-room lectures since they considered class-room teaching as 'inevitable' and 'inherently desirable'. Towards 'University of the Air' or 'Open University' they adopted an attitude of scepticism, contempt and ridicule. And prior to his joining the Open University as its first Vice-Chancellor, Perry himself regarded University of the Air "as a political gimmick, unlikely ever to be put into practice, and likely if it were to produce only a few graduates of relatively poor quality."[2] The crux of all this is that the established universities were not prepared to touch distance education even with a pair of tongs.

By now, it is crystal clear that it was because of the British academic community's above attitude towards distance education that the establishment of the Open University as a separate institution (outside the framework of the

conventional universities) became a necessity. Perry did not deny the theoretical possibility of the established universities tackling this problem. The hard fact was that the vested interests wanted to preserve the elitist character of higher education at any cost.[3] In this situation, when there was pressure of demand for higher education on a part-time basis on the one hand, and refusal of the vested interests to accept any change in the elitist character of the existing universities while meeting this demand on the other, the idea of the "University of the Air" or the "Open University" suggested itself as a compromise solution. Development of broadcasting which happened to occur at this time provided the semblance of feasibility to this idea. Also, the success of correspondence education in USSR (though the context and the socio-political system there are quite different) provided Mr. Wilson, the then Prime Minister of Britain, the political opportunity of setting up the 'Open University' in the name of 'educational egalitarianism'. Thus, the basically inegalitarian and elitist British system of higher education was kept intact by setting up Open University to act as a safety valve to release excessive pressure on the established system.

It should be noted, however, that Perry's views on distance education related to the category of genuine distance learners (i.e., mature adults with greater motivation, sense of purpose and life experience) who, for one reason or another, could not come to the campus and for whom distance education was really meant. It was certainly not meant for or even considered suitable for young school leavers. It was clearly recognised that though distance education could perhaps be provided at a comparatively lower cost, it was neither suitable to young school leavers (who lacked the maturity required for self-learning) nor could it offer the same 'product' to them (as it lacked the socialisation component of education).[4]

Walter Perry was aware of the 'pitiably inadequate' standard of teaching that went on in established universities. He had tried some tentative experiments but realised that his concept ran counter to the established practices. He thought that a similar approach would be needed in the context of teaching at a distance, which would ultimately spread back into the conventional universities and thus raise standards of teaching everywhere.[5] And in his application for Vice-Chancellorship of the Open University, he made a statement to that effect.[6]

What is interesting to note in Perry's observation is his idea of reforming teaching methods in conventional universities from outside—from the platform of the Open University. It is astounding how anyone could visualise that the established universities, determined to preserve their citadel of elitism and thus refusing to have anything to do with part-time education, would improve their methodology by adopting the innovations of distance teaching universities. It is this surprisingly naive idea of reform (from outside) which has been uncritically incorporated by a number of other countries as one of the objectives of their Open Universities or similar institutions.

Education Remains Elitist

The establishment of Open University in Britain as a separate institution for distance education (outside the framework of the established universities) became a necessity because the established universities refused to own distance education as their responsibility. Had these universities accepted it as their concern, the whole set-up would have been different. Distance education was not intended to be a substitute for initial higher education. In fact, it was considered unsuitable for young school leavers. Therefore, it was supposed to cater to a different clientele—to carry education to the door-steps of those mature adults (with greater motivation and sense of purpose) who, for various reasons, could not come to the campus to receive education. It is clearly borne out by the following facts; (a) only those who were 21 years of age and above, were eligible for admission; (b) there were no other entry qualifications except age and (c) the first year courses were invariably foundation courses meant for the beginners.

However, the Open University offered the same courses as were offered by conventional universities. This is understandable as in a market economy, the requirements are determined by the market which dictates the established structure as well as those working on the periphery. Distance education was frankly admitted to be a kind of 'second best' and the degrees to be awarded by the Open University were not claimed to be at par with those of the conventional universities, even by the planners of the Open University.[7]

Finally, the elitist conventional universities did not permit any change in established teaching practices while Perry thought (though quite naively) that improvements in the methods of teaching brought about by the Open University would ultimately spread back into the established universities and raise the standards of teaching everywhere.

A Different Perspective

As discussed earlier, the British Open University was established as an autonomous institution in the field of distance education against a certain background and with a definite objective in view. However, some countries have established (and some are in the process of setting up) similar institutions, but with a different purpose and perspective. In U.K., the Open University was launched, while preserving the elitist character of conventional higher education, to take education to the door steps of those who, for various reasons, could not come to the campuses. This category included(a) adults bypassed by regular university education, (b) more ambitious adults who wanted to add to their qualifications and (c) adults who wanted it on a continuing basis for updating their knowledge. Hence, the clientele consisted of mature adults with greater motivation, sense of purpose and life experience, compared to young school leavers. In contrast to this, in some other countries including India, institutions of non-formal education have been started with a view primarily to keeping current school leavers clamouring for regular higher education away from campuses mainly for preserving

the elitist character of higher education. Some of the professed aims of establishing such institutions are the following ;

— to absorb the overflow of school leavers who fail to get admission in regular colleges and contribute to a significant reduction of unit costs in higher education;

— to keep students away from campuses where they are 'likely to get politicised';

— to make education more relevant to social needs through vocationalisation; and

— to engage in the reform of university teaching by developing new methodologies.

Regarding the first objective, it can be said that its two parts are two sides of the same coin. It is often argued that when resources are limited, it is wiser to concentrate them over a few institutions (the so-called centres of exellence) rather than spreading them thinly over a large number of institutions and to shunt the overflow of students to the low cost alternative of distance teaching. This argument is completely misleading. Firstly, we do not need scholars in abundance, but we do need a population educated to the limit of their individual capacities. Secondly, scholarship (or excellence) is the product not only of the environment provided by educational institutions but also of the innate abilities of the people. Scientific enquiries have shown that distribution of innate abilities among people is normal, with most people falling in the middle and a small fraction being exceptionally intelligent or exceptionally dull.

From this it follows that greater the equality of educational opportunities, greater the scope for the emergence and nurture of excellence and vice versa. It is surprising that the arguments in favour of concentrating limited resources over a few institutions are advanced particularly in those countries where even universal elementary education is still a distant dream and where university enrolments as a percentage of the relevant age group are quite low by international standards. In the name of limited resources, the dual policy of maintaining a high quality sector for the elite and a poor quality sector for the under-privileged cannot go on indefinitely in a democratic society without accumulating tensions inherent in such a policy. The real intent of such policies is to perpetuate elitism rather than "nurture of excellent".

As far as the objective of keeping students away from the campuses for political reasons is concerned, it is sufficient to point out that, "the root causes (of unrest) lie not in higher education but in the society as a whole, that students are, to a large extent, sharing the tensions and strains and widely varying reactions of the comparable age group outside the universities and colleges. Their intellectual and moral sensitivities and their articulateness may be greater and they have peculiar difficulties of their own but it is the outside world and its changes which bite most hard....The wild thrashing around which seems to characterise many of their actions, the sudden escala-

on of conflict arising from apparently trivial incidents are indicative of the esperation which so many young people feel because of the profundity of ie gulf which lies between the ideas and the reality, democracy and justice as iey are preached and practised."[8] In other words, the campus unrest is the roduct of the general social discontent arising out of the deepening onomic crisis, acute socio-economic inequalities and general degeneration values. In fact, teaching claimants for higher education by two qualitatively fferent methods is itself a potential source of unrest.

Regarding the relevance of higher education, it is argued that conven- onal universities have concentrated on traditional and socially prestigious ourses, ignoring educated manpower requirements of the country and are oducing obsolete knowledge. Therefore, it is contended that, to make lucation more relevant to social needs, a separate distance teaching set-up required because the existing system has developed certain rigidities and is ot amenable to change. It is interesting to note that such theories about the leged irresponsiveness of the conventional universities are advanced in arket economies where the job market is supposed to determine the type of oduct to be produced by the universities.

In India we have witnessed, in recent years, violent swings in student irolments from science courses to commerce and management courses id vice versa in response to the slightest changes in the moods of the job arket. In fact, in market economies, such situations emerge on account of ilure to generate enough employment opportunities as a result of which the oducts of the universities appear to be "excessive" or "obsolete". Univer- ies are not independent entities whose course cannot be changed. Is it not ecessary for the conventional universities also to vocationalise their ourses ?

Regarding the objective of reform of university teaching, we have ready hinted at the naivety of this argument. It is beyond comprehension ow conventional universities can be induced to reform their teaching ethods when they do not feel the need for doing so. Their teaching ethods suit the situation they are placed in. Unless distance teaching ecomes an integral part of their academic responsibilities and reform of aching methods becomes a necessity for them, they cannot be expected to cept any 'grafting' from outside. We take this up in detail later on.

It needs to be emphasized at this stage that none of the above arguments gically leads to the division of claimants for regular higher education to the on-formal channels of eduction, and even in the case of genuine distance arners, to the creation of a separate institution away from the mainstream of gher education. The remedy rather lies in curing the ailing education sys- m itself. If the problem is one of resource constraint, then the solution is to etermine national priorities regarding the quantum of education, including gher education, rather than creating a low-cost sector of education ong with a quality sector where finance is no problem. There is no need to y that keeping students away from campuses and hoping to combat student rest in this way, rather than being a solution, is bound to aggravate social

tensions further in a democratic society. As far as the objective of making education relevant to social needs is concerned, obviously it is a laudable aim and applies to education in general.

Educational Planning Under Socialism

Very often examples of socialist countries, particularly of the Soviet Union, are cited in support of the educational dualism referred to above. It is pointed out that after all, even in Soviet Russia, higher education is provided on a selective basis, that a sizeable chunk of the student population receive their higher education through evening and correspondence courses, that there are exclusive schools and academies for the nurture of excellence, etc. However, in these arguments, vital facts are ignored. For example, in Soviet Union education up to the X standard is compulsory so that every child gets equal opportunities for his development and the process of selection begins after that stage. There is no unemployment problem so that students not really interested or fit for higher education don't have to cling to institutions in the hope of improving their employment prospects.

Planning of higher education in USSR is based on manpower requirements of the country with the result that there are no locational or vocational mismatches. In the Soviet Union, correspondence and evening courses are meant only for the education of the in-service workers and not meant to absorb the overflow of current school leavers who fail to get admission in regular day institutions. Admissions to all the channels of higher education are merit-based, made on the basis of a single entrance examination. The same academic staff teach all the three categories of students, all students sit the same examinations so that standards are the same and no stigma is attached to education through correspondence. Lastly, exclusive academies are meant for the exceptionally gifted children and "excellence" is not "nurtured" on the basis of unequal opportunities. Most important of all, education (whether regular or correspondence or evening) is free throughout.

From Academic to Industrial Enterprise

Sometimes, the case for distance teaching institutions is based on economies of large-scale production through the use of mass communication media, mainly radio, television and printed material. Apart from the existence of economies of scale being questionable, the argument essentially implies standardised product whose cost of production is sought to be minimised through using large-scale production techniques typical of an industrial economy.

In many countries, the basic objective is to contain the pressure of democratic demand for higher education at the lowest cost. Instead of devising ways and means of increasing and facilitating mutual interaction between the teacher and students and among the students themselves, the use of this very critical input is minimised and the whole effort is concentrated on structuring and designing a package so meticulously that the student is turned into

passive consumer of whatever is given to him. Herein lies the secret of pro- iding 'education' at a lower cost compared to the cost of conventional ducation. In the process, the very essence of higher education— levelopment of thinking and analytical faculties of human mind—is los ight of. Scripts of study materials are written by outside 'experts' on a con ractual basis (who lack understanding of and continuing stake or faith in the vstem), 'educational technologists' advise or decide about the form of pre- entation of the material, mediamen have their own angle to look at the mat- er, editing may be done by another set of persons, and finally, the most rucial element of interaction through face-to-face tution or guidance (if any) nd through written assignments is delegated to adjunct staff. In brief, the hole thing works like almost an assembly line in a big factory and there is a igh degree of fragmentation. Thus, the academic enterprise is turned into n industrial enterprise and a static relationship between the teacher and the aught (via 'autodidactic packages') replaces the dynamic process of interac- on which is the essence of the process of education.

Teaching, in fact, cannot organically be separated from learning and oth are meant to sharpen the thinking and analytical faculties of human nind, rather than teaching being a passing on of a given package of nowledge from the teacher to the student. Apart from constant increase in ie quantum of knowledge (including refutation of old theories and thesis), hich the teacher incorporates at every point of time, the manner of presen- ation also undergoes a continuous change in the light of interaction between ie teacher and the taught. Therefore, the academics cannot be taught how to each, least of all through a grafting from outside. It is only through the cons- ant interaction and exchange amongst 'learners' (whether they are teachers r students) that the optimum teaching methodology can emerge and be ccepted by the academics.

n Integrated Approach

It is interesting to note that in the literature on distance education, views pposed to setting up of autonomous distance teaching universities and in vour of an integrated model are either disposed of summarily or ignored ompletely. In this context, it would be very pertinent to quote the opinion of commission appointed by the Whitlam Labour Government in 1973 on the ounding of an open university for Australia. The Commission rejected the lea of setting up a separate distance teaching university for Australia and oted in favour of the existing system known as the Australian Integrated lodel under which all academics have two responsibilities (one for the on- ampus students and the other for the off-campus students) on the ground at "if it (the Commission) were to limit its recommendations to the creation f a single major institution like the British Open University, it might actually educe the likelihood of existing institutions adopting innovatory olicies."[9]

Therefore, if the purpose is to reform and improve university teaching, e best way to go about it is to integrate distance education with the

mainstream of higher education. Let us try to visualise how this integrated model would function in practice. Under this model, (a) all academics share the responsibility of teaching regular as well as distance students; (b) there is a full-fledged department of applied educational sciences (or educational methodology) equipped with adequate facilities for research in human learning process (and also simple audio visual aid facilities as recommended by the UGC Task-Force on Mass Communication and Educational Technology[10] (c) the same courses are taught to on-campus as well as distance students and they take the same examinations.

Since all academics have to teach both types of students, development of appropriate techniques becomes a necessity for them and improvements in teaching necessarily flow from one sector to other, reinforcing improvement in the former. In the case of distance students who lack direct contact with the teacher, instructional materials have to be structured in a manner that facilitates self-learning, and then communicated to them. However, instructional materials designed to suit the needs of distance students are useful for the on-campus student as well and communication of such materials poses no problem in this case. This scheme of things offers the additional advantage of pre-testing the pedagogic value of such materials in regular institutions and making necessary improvements on the basis of feed-back. It also makes it possible to reap the economies of large-scale production of study materials at the same time, providing for constant updating and improvements. Thus properly structured study materials can greatly facilitate the learning process of students of both the categories and minimise their dependence on substandard text books and cheap notes available in the market. Of course, preparation of such study materials essentially involves team work and calls for a new division of labour in higher education. Undoubtedly, the kind of set up we have visualised is most conducive for the creation of any number of teams since a large number of teachers in each discipline will be available. This integration of regular and distance teaching in various disciplines will also provide the best ground for cross-fertilisation of academic ideas.

In a regular institution, every subject has to be covered wholly through class-room lectures and very little is left to the student for self-learning. In fact, it should be possible to pick up portions of a topic (and of a subject and thus of a full course) which instead of being covered in class-room lectures, can be conveniently and usefully shifted on to the student for self-learning. This will not only reduce the amount of lecturing needed by a teacher to cover a topic or subject, but will also enable him to stick to the logical thread of his argument without having to digress into related matters or concepts, which he has to do if the basic contents are not understood by the student in advance.

There are a number of technological devices available at the moment which, without affecting the quality of teaching, can reduce unnecessary drudgery involved in certain aspects of teaching. For example, during the course of a lecture, a teacher may have to waste a lot of his valuable time in writing long passages or tables, drawing complicated diagrams or sketches

on the black-board. With the help of an overhead projector, these things can be shown on the screen instantaneously if the necessary materials are prepared in advance.

Moreover, it is a recognised fact that there do exist some exceptionally good teachers who are extremely effective as far as communication of knowledge is concerned. It should be perfectly possible to use audio or video tapes to make such excellent teaching available to larger numbers. Thus, it is possible that, without cutting into the essential socialisation component of higher education, use of technological devices can greatly reduce the drudgery part of teaching, improve the quality of instruction and increase the intake of students in regular institutions.

To illustrate our point about the usefulness of the integrated model, we take the example of Delhi University where about 1.05 lakhs of students were pursuing under-graduate courses during 1982-83 through 5 distinct channels—regular day colleges, evening colleges, correspondence courses, non-collegiate women delegacy and the external cell. The mode of instruction in regular colleges is class-room lecturing shile in correspondence courses, the major medium of instruction is the printed study material supplemented by a few (say 20) capsuled lectures per subject. Non-collegiate women delegacy provides 35 to 40 capsuled class-room lectures per subject to the students (by inviting teachers from various colleges on Sundays and other holidays) and the external cell only registers students for the external degrees of Delhi University. Now, if the teachers concerned with the teaching of various subjects in regular colleges and correspondence courses are merged with their respective subject departments at the university level and along with it, a separate department of educational methodology equipped with adequate research facilities and a small audio-visual aid centre (on the pattern suggested by UGC Task Force) is established, a framework comes into existence in which optimum educational methodology based on research in human learning processes can grow out of the soil of the university.

To sum up, we can say that the academic advantage of the integrated model is that (a) it creates the necessity for improving teaching methods; and (b) it provides the most fertile ground for the growth of teaching methodologies. As a result, quality of teaching improves everywhere whose benefits are reaped by regular as well as distance students. Besides, a judicious use of modern teaching aids and machines helps in reducing the required teaching time and even a minor reduction may make it possible to have two shifts in colleges, thus making a more intensive use of the educational infrastructure and increasing significantly the intake in colleges. However, such matters are rarely, if ever, decided purely on the basis of academic considerations. In under-developed economies which are dominated by private sector and cannot generate sufficient employment opportunities, the powers-that-be regard education as an encumbrance, apart from being a wastage, and try to provide semblance of education at the

lowest possible cost, by using the institutions of non-formal distance education as dumping grounds. This, in a nutshell, is the case in India, in relation to higher eduction.

Untenable Arguments

Till now, we have been talking of non-formal system in the sphere of higher education, where there does exist a category of genuine distance learners who have not been able to avail of formal education channels for various reasons and in whose case there is a need to take education to the door-steps. Evidently, it is not possible to visualise the case for non-formal education at the school level since the 'greater motivation, sense of purpose and life experience' of the young pupils are out of question (We are not talking of adult education where the case for non-formal education may be slightly stronger). But our educational ideologues do not hesitate in stating proudly, "In the context of elementary education, the new initiative through the Non-formal Education Programme also needs some mention. This programme started only towards the end of the Sixth Five Year Plan in the nine educationally backward states. It incorporates a much greater measure of flexibility in terms of teacher pupil ratio, qualifications of teachers, timing of classes, speed of learning, etc. Initially, it was conceived to meet the needs of drop-outs, especially girls, who, it was felt, could not come to the regular schools because of other pressures and preoccupations. Now, faced with *other constraints* non-formal education is being assigned a very large responsibility in relation to the achievement of universalisation of elementary education by 1990. It is expected that of the additional 64 million children coming up for elementary education, nearly 39 million will be educated entirely through this system".[11] It does not require much imagination to realise what these 'other constraints' are. A clue can be found in the Appendices to the Challenge of Education. In the paragraph on Non-formal Educational Programmes, it is said, "since children of the socially disadvantaged groups will continue to work at home or outside and *financial constraints will stand in the way of opening formal schools,* Non-formal Education Programme will have to be expanded during the 7th Five Year Plan. The Sixth Plan made a beginning and a big leap is called for in the Seventh Plan."[12]

The first paragraph under the heading 'Priorities in Educational Development' in the document Challenge of Education, speaks rhetorically of the role of elementary education : "Elementary education is the most crucial stage of education spanning the first eight years of schooling and laying the foundation for the personality, attitudes, social confidence, habits, learning skills and communicating capabilities of pupils. The basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic are acquired at this stage. Values are internalised and environmental consciousness sharpened. This is the stage when physical growth can be assisted, interests in sports and adventure can be roused, and manual dexterity can also be developed. If a child goes through good education at this stage, he never looks back in life for then he has been prepared to exercise his initiatives to overcome difficulties."[13] While agreeing basically

with the role of elementary education enunciated above, one is left wondering, and no attempt is made to explain, how non-formal system at the level of elementary education is going to help in achieving this. Understandably, the ideologues are aware of 'several reservations, hesitations and doubts about the programme' and find it necessary 'that the public opinion is motivated in favour of non-formal education.' The sense of guilt is expressed in the fear, "Society should not get the impression that two types of education are being made available—one, which is superior, for those who can afford, and the other for those who cannot afford the facility of formal schooling."[11] What is surprising is that rather than having an open debate on the non-formal system of education at the school level and convincing the society of its role and importance, it has been thought fit to go ahead with its implementation. "The data available for 1982-83 indicates that substantial progress has been made towards the opening of non-formal centres as well as promoting enrolments therein. In the educationally backward states alone, which were the focal point of the non-formal education programme, more than sixty eight thousand centres have been opened for this purpose. About ninety per cent of these centres are for primary education while the remaining are for the middle level."[15] In these centres, 14.7 lakh students were enrolled across the nine educationally backward states...on an average, each non-formal education centre for primary education had nearly twenty students while for the middle level it was fifteen."[16] Non-formal part-time education system has been developed in a large way as an alternative supportive system (mark, 'alternative' as well as 'supportive') to formal schooling. Under this system, children who cannot join and attend the formal schools because of socio-economic reasons are offered elementary education of the same standard at places and timings suited to their needs and convenience. Children in the age-group 9-14 (9-11 for the middle level) are offered education in non-formal centres in a graded and condensed form... As a part of this scheme, grants are also given to voluntary organisations for running the programme of non-formal education....By 1984-85, about 1.41 lakh centres enrolling about 3 million children were established particularly in educationally backward states of the country."[17]

It is important to note that nothing is known about the basic structure of these non-formal centres, how they function and 'impart' elementary education to the millions of students enrolled, pedagogic differences between formal schooling and non-formal system of school education, etc. One does not know whether the resources spent on these centres achieve something in terms of effective literacy, or go down the drain as is the case with many programmes in India. Another claim about the non-formal education relates to the use of new educational technology. It is suggested that, "Use of mass media for non-formal education programme should be explored. With the network of radio reaching the farthermost corner of the country and television facilities also expanding with the launching of INSAT-IB, non-formal education system should avail of these facilities."[18] Though it is also recognised "... that irrespective of the content, quality and arrangements for

dissemination, the impact of educational programmes will depend essentially upon the availability of radios, television sets, tape recorders, video cassette players, etc. All these are quite expensive and what is more, require reliable management for repair and maintenance. If adequate funds cannot be provided for their supply to schools, and for their upkeep and use, it would not be possible to realise the potential of the new technolgoies."[10] But our educational ideologues are undaunted by realities on the ground and are extremely impatient to take the nation to the 21st century with the help of impressive programmes like Computer Literacy Programme (CLASS). The most intriguing aspect of the whole thing is that the new educational technology is supposed to be used in the non-formal system of education which is precisely meant for the backward and disadvantaged sections of society for whom this technology is most inaccessible.

1 Perry, 'Open University', 1976, p. 5.

2 *Ibid*, preface, page XIII

3 *Ibid*, p 1.

4 *Ibid*, p 57

"We were all aware that the country faced an increase in demand from school leavers for university education and it was in some ways tempting to offer to meet some of this demand If we were right in assuming that our education would be cheaper than that in a conventional university, we could offer substantial savings to whatever government was in power On the other hand, we felt that to follow a course of study in isolation demanded qualities of maturity that would usually be lacking in people as young as 18 I also believed, as did many of my colleagues, that a young person of 18 would be missing a great deal if he were denied the opportunity of studying in a regular college with all that it offered in the way of social life and the stimulation of colleagues "

5 *Ibid*, preface

6 *Ibid*, p. 54

7 *Ibid*, p 57

"I think we all felt that what we could offer was very much a second best for people of this age We offered a chance to those who had not been able to go to regular universities, the only chance that such people could have "

8 Nayak and others, "A Fresh Look at Higher Education," Chapter IV.

9 "Distance Teaching Universities" edited by Rumble and Harry McCormick 1982.

10 UGC Task Force Report, pp 56-58

11 *Challenge of Education*, pp. 39-40 (para 3 13).

12 *Appendices to Challenge of Education*, pp. 1-31, 32.

13. *Challenge of Education*, p 5. (para 1. 12).

14 *Appendices to Challenge of Education* p 1-32, para 4 10

15 *Challenge of Education*, p. 22 (para 2. 23).

16 *Ibid*., p. 23 (para 2 24)

17 *Appendices to Challenge of Education*, pp. 1-6 (para. 3. 3. 3).

18 *Ibid*., pp. 1-32 (para. 4. 10).

19. *Challenge of Education*, p. 78 (para. 4. 36).

BALAJI PANDEY *

Educational Development Among Scheduled Castes

THE MID-NINETEENTH century social reform movement directed its campaign against child-marriage, sati, promotion of women's education, widow remarriage etc., through the platforms of Brahamo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Arya Samaj. The movement's greatest drawback was its limitation to the upper castes. This caste bias was apparent because its leadership invariably came from the caste Hindus. The only exception was the emergence of Jyotiba Phule, himself a lower caste, who started a movement through which he 'asserted the worth of man irrespective of caste'.[1] Phule provided the leadership for the anti-caste movement in Maharashtra and his 'passion for the untouchables was unheard of and his sense of justice included every oppressed caste and he had absolutely no caste bias'.[2] He demanded equality for all and his movement was against untruth, injustice and hypocrisy of the Hindu social order dominated by Brahmin supremacy.[3] Phule held the view that the low status of shudras was due to the denial of education to them. Through his organisation, the *Satya Sodhak Samaj*, he propagated that "for want of education their intellect deteriorated, for want of intellect their morality decayed, for want of morality their progress stopped, for want of progress their health vanished, all their sorrows sprung from illiteracy."[4] In 1848, he opened a school for non-Brahmins in Poona and[5] three years later established what is considered as 'the first school in India for untouchables'.[6] As a result of Phule's untiring campaign against untouchability, and for the uplift of the untouchables, some of the other socio-religious movements also gradually started organising schools for them.

Credit must be given to the movement launched by Phule which forced the colonial administration to open the doors of government schools to the low caste communities. Here, mention may be made of the well-known 'Dharwar Case' which occurred in 1854 when a low caste boy sought permission for admission in a government school at Dharwar. The administration refused permission on the grounds that if permitted, children of caste Hindus would withdraw from the school and which would virtually lead to the closure of institutions. However, the matter was noticed by the Government of India who referred the issue to the Court of Directors of the Company. The Directors opined that no exclusion solely on the ground of caste should be

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allowed. "The educational institutions of the government are intended by us to be opened to all classes and we cannot depart from a principle which is, essentially sound and the maintenance of which is of the first importance. It is not impossible that in some cases the enforcement of the principle may be followed by the withdrawal of a portion of the scholars, but with regard to the assumed unwillingness of the wealthier classes to contribute to the establishment of such schools, it is sufficient to remark that those persons who object to its practical enforcement, will be at liberty to withhold their contributions and to apply their funds, if they think fit, to the formation of schools on a different basis".[7] Therefore, although government schools were open for all castes, the upper-castes also got the freedom to set up schools exclusively for its members.

In view of the opinion expressed by the Court of Directors, the first Indian Education Commission in 1882 recommended that "all primary schools wholly maintained at the cost of school boards and all primary schools that are aided from the same fund and are not registered as special schools, should be understood to be open to all castes and class of the community".[8] Despite this policy, the colonial administration did not make serious efforts to promote education among lower castes. The reason for such non-committal attitude of the administration was due to the severity of untouchability prevalent in the country and any attempt to promote education among them would have invited wrath from the high caste Hindus. More than that, the British were not interested in disturbing the existing land relations on which rested the caste system. Thus, they were not able to bring about any real change in the situation of untouchables. Only a very small section of them could receive education and most of them were those who were influenced by missionary activities or who had converted to Christianity or received concessions from princely states.[9] Commenting on the progress of Education among this section, a retired official of Indian Education Services observed, "We have to consider in its bearing on mass education, the position of the depressed classes. The depressed or untouchable classes include about sixty million persons. The existence of such masses obviously constitutes a grave obstacle to the extension of literacy".[10]

A little over a hundred years ago, provincial governments in India had implemented special programmes for the welfare of "depressed" or deprived sections of society. In 1885, the Madras government framed the Grant-in-Aid Code to regulate financial aid to educational institutions with special facilities for students of "depressed classes."

In 1918, following representations from various communities, the Maharaja of Mysore appointed a committee—the Miller Committee—which in its report suggested special facilities to backward communities with regard to education and this was made into an official order in 1921. In 1928, the government of Bombay set up a committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. O.H.B. Sarte to identify Backward Classes and in 1931, this committee classified this section of the people into categories such as "Depressed

Classes", "Aboliginal and Hill Tribes", "Other Backward Classes" etc., and recommended special facilities regarding education for them.

In Travancore, educational facilities for the untouchables started in 1926, The measures adopted were the offer of fee concessions, stipends, scholarships, boarding grants, free supply of text book etc. In Cochin in 1926, the Director of Public Instruction was made the Protector of the depressed classes with a special staff and in 1931, a separate department was created to promote education. In Baroda, separate schools were abolished in 1931 which was opposed vehemently by the caste Hindus. They not only withdrew their children from schools but also set fire to the standing crops of the scheduled caste peasants.

It needs to be stressed that these measures arose from a complex interaction between the colonial policy of divide and rule, the growing strength of the national movement and the emergence of non-Brahmin movements in parts of India. Despite the campaign for promotion of education among this section, the progress was very slow, in fact insignificant. According to the 1931 census, the literacy rate among this section was just 1.9 per cent.

The colonial policy of divide and rule, the non-Brihmin movements, in particular that led by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and the mobilisation of the "untouchable" masses by Gandhi in the 30's, their electoral significance, all combined to exert its influence on government policies in the post-independence era. Soon after independence, the government assumed special responsibility to ameliorate the condition of Scheduled Castes. In the field of education, the first and foremost measure was the Constitutional guarantee which says, "The state shall promote with special care, the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation".[11] Recognising the importance of education as a vehicle for the uplift of this section of the people, the First Plan stated that "Education is the most urgent need of these communities".[12] The untouchability (offence) Act of 1955 facilitated access of schooling to the children of these communities.[13]

The Government appointed a Backward Class Commission under the Chairmanship of Kaka Kalelkar in 1953 to enquire into the causes for backwardness and also recommend measures for their uplift. The Commission submitted its report in 1955. On the issue of education, the Commission commented that "*the problem of education in most of the states is chiefly the problem of the backward classes for it is they who are extremely backward in education*".[14] In its wide-ranging and comprehensive report, the Commission identified the following reasons for educational backwardness–

- "Traditional apathy for education on account of social and environmental conditions or occupational handicaps.
- Poverty and lack of means of a large number of communities to educate their children.
- Lack of educational institutions in the rural areas.

- Living in inaccessible areas and lack of proper communications.
- Lack of adequate educational aids in the form of freeship, scholarships and monetary grants for the purchase of books and clothing.
- Lack of residential hostel facilities in places where educational institutions are situated.
- Unemployment among the educated acting as a damper on the desire of some of the communities to educate their children.
- Defective educational system which does not train students by appropriate occupations and professions.

The Government, however, rejected the main recommendations of the Commission but asked the state governments to draw their own lists on the basis of criteria worked out by them and then take action.

Despite the fact that the causes for educational backwardness among this section were identified in the early years of independence, the official documents on education prepared in the years that followed continued to stress the same views regarding the progress of education as had been identified by the Kalelkar Commission. A decade later, the first Education Commission[15] discussed in detail all the aspects of education and its recommendations provided the basis for policy formulation. It said :

> "one of the important social objectives of education is to equalise opportunity enabling the backward or under privileged classes and individuals to use education as a lever for the improvement of their condition. Every society that values social justice and is anxious to improve the lot of the common man and cultivate all available talent, must ensure progressive equality of opportunity to all sections of the population. This is the only guarantee for the building up of an egalitarian and human society in which the exploitation of the weak will be minimised.
>
> Two other forms of educational inequalities which are peculiar to the Indian situation need attention. The first is the wide disparity between the education of boys and girls at all stages and in all sectors of education. *The second is the equally wide or sometimes "wider disparity" of educational development between the advanced classes and the backward ones–the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. On grounds of social justice as well as for the furtherence of democracy, it is essential to make special efforts to equalise educational opportunities between these grounds"*.

A Committee of six Members of Parliament, the President of the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh, and a Legal Adviser from the Law Minister was set up in 1965 to consider issues of untouchability, economic and educational development. Following discussion of its report in Parliament, a Parliamentary Committee was set up in August 1968. This reported that "In spite of increasing attention given since independence to the education of weaker sections of the community, the gap between their level of educational development and the average for the society as a whole, still continue to be very wide"

Although the National Policy on Education as far back as in 1968 called for strenuous efforts to equalise educational opportunity and more intensive efforts to develop education among the backward communities, the more recent Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for the year 1979-1981 observed that 'the educational programmes for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have not succeeded in achieving the desired impact' although, the provision of funds for development programmes for these communities rose from Rs. 39 crores in First Plan to Rs. 327 crores in the Fifth Plan and a total of Rs. 744 crores was spent till the end of the 1978-79. Of these amounts, nearly 48 per cent was spent on educational schemes alone" [16]

Literacy

Literacy is an important indicator of progress both for society as a whole and for individual communities within it. In this context, the table below indicates that though there has been some improvement in the overall literacy rate in the post-independence period, nearly 80 per cent of the Scheduled Caste population have yet to report that they can *'read, write and understand,'* a definition utilised by the Census.

Table I. Literacy Rate

Year	Person	Males	Females
1961	10.27	16.16	3.29
1971	14.67	22.36	6.44
1981	21.38	31.12	10.82

SOURCE: Census of India.

A comparison of literacy rate between general population (excluding Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes) and Scheduled Castes is indicated in the Table 2 and 3. The tables indicate that after 38 years of independence, the Constitutional guarantee for equality of opportunity in access to education, and recommendations of various committees and commissions to improve education among scheduled castes at par with the general population, the gap in literacy level is very high. Whereas nearly 42 per cent of the general population are literate (male 52.34 per cent, female 29. 42 per cent), the literacy rate among Scheduled Castes is only 21.38 per cent (male 31.12 per cent, female 10.93 per cent); literacy in rural areas for general population is 35.22 per cent (male 46.12 per cent, female 21.68 per cent) but among Scheduled Castes it is only 18.48 per cent (male 27.91 per cent, female 8.45 per cent). In the urban areas, literacy among general population is 60.38 per cent (male 64-45 per cent, female 51.19 per cent), while among Scheduled Castes it is 36.60 per cent (male 47.54 per cent, females 24.34 per cent).

The gap in literacy rate among Scheduled Castes, between rural and urban, and between male and female is also very high. Nearly 72 per cent male in rural areas and 52 per cent in urban areas are illiterate. The corres-

ponding figures for females are 91.55 per cent and 75.66 per cent respectively. In Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, the female illiteracy rate among Scheduled Castes is over 90 per cent. In Andhra Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Punjab, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu, this rate ranges between 80 per cent to 90 per cent. The *Working Group on Development of Literacy among Scheduled Castes* (1980-85)[17] commented that there were several districts in the country where the literacy rate among Scheduled Caste women is as low as one per cent going down to 0.2 per cent.

Table 2

Literacy Rates Among General Population 1981 (Inclusive of 0-4 Age)

	General Population (Excluding Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes)								
	Total			*Rural*			*Urban*		
	Person	*Male*	*Female*	*Persons*	*Male*	*Female*	*Persons*	*Male*	*Female*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
INDIA	41.30	52.34	29.42	34.22	46.13	21.68	60.38	64.45	51.19
Andhra Pradesh	33.90	44.03	23.54	26.78	26.83	16.60	54.06	63.98	43.60
Bihar	30.16	43.07	16.39	25.99	39.08	12.30	56.05	66.11	43.83
Gujarat	48.13	58.81	36.73	40.43	52.44	27.82	62.29	70.21	53.53
Haryana	39.90	52.16	25.83	33.36	46.99	17.85	61.19	68.78	44.51
Himachal Pradesh	47.36	58.08	36.89	45.08	56.14	33.48	71.09	76.08	64.76
Jammu & Kashmir	27.05	36.64	16.58	21.65	31.66	10.46	46.27	54.19	37.19
Karnataka	42.91	53.61	31.35	35.41	47.13	23.43	59.57	67.50	50.98
Kerala	72.49	77.16	67.97	71.41	76.26	66.72	76.91	80.78	73.12
Madhya Pradesh	36.14	49.19	22.00	28.07	42.10	13.12	58.08	67.88	46.95
Maharashtra	50.90	62.46	38.49	41.88	55.46	26.16	65.60	73.05	56.77
Manipur	42.10	55.16	28.63	37.42	50.82	23.60	51.93	64.30	39.18
Meghalaya	44.96	51.86	36.09	29.86	36.92	21.10	66.33	72.16	58.40
Nagaland	54.38	61.06	40.90	48.06	55.91	31.61	61.91	67.35	51.38
Orissa	43.01	55.77	29.84	39.71	52.81	26.53	61.81	71.29	50.49
Punjab	47.11	53.16	40.25	40.60	47.18	33.20	61.61	66.30	56.20
Rajasthan	29.30	42.13	15.30	21.61	34.64	7.59	52.22	64.28	39.43
Sikkim	34.84	44.83	22.36	30.91	41.23	18.60	55.31	61.41	45.55
Tamil Nadu	51.00	67.75	33.85	42.53	55.73	29.18	65.95	74.75	56.73
Tripura	53.92	62.87	44.40	49.37	58.99	39.08	75.98	81.98	69.80
Uttar Pradesh	30.45	42.51	16.79	25.94	38.79	11.54	48.48	57.01	38.40
West Bengal	48.12	57.81	37.38	41.85	50.44	31.59	66.00	72.07	58.54

SOURCE : (a) Census of India General Population Table 1981.
(b) Primary Census Abstract : Castes Population 1981 Part II B (11).

Table 3.

Literacy Rates Among Scheduled Caste Population–1981 (Inclusive of 0-4 Age)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
21.38	31.12	10.93	18.48	27.91	8.45	36.60	47.54	24.34
17.65	23.82	10.26	14.05	20.66	7.28	37.70	47.78	27.09
10.40	18.02	2.51	9.11	16.26	1.78	24.27	35.89	10.83
39.79	53.14	25.61	34.93	48.72	20.54	49.79	62.01	36.35
20.15	31.45	7.06	18.73	29.93	5.82	28.16	39.84	14.21
31.50	41.94	20.63	30.42	40.82	19.66	50.69	60.28	39.18
22.44	32.34	11.70	21.36	31.38	10.52	30.69	39.66	20.86
30.59	29.35	11.55	15.36	23.64	6.88	39.22	49.38	28.45
55.96	62.33	49.73	54.75	61.19	48.45	64.75	70.61	59.00
18.97	30.26	6.87	15.37	25.99	4.07	35.48	49.40	20.01
35.55	48.85	21.53	30.21	44.00	16.01	47.13	59.02	39.96
33.63	41.94	24.95	31.84	40.27	23.08	42.63	50.10	34.51
25.78	33.28	16.30	22.54	31.07	12.53	29.54	35.66	21.09
22.41	35.26	9.40	21.72	34.50	8.84	29.00	42.36	14.94
23.86	30.96	15.67	22.74	29.84	14.58	28.70	35.80	20.43
14.04	24.40	2.69	11.26	20.51	1.18	26.75	41.94	9.71
28.06	35.74	19.65	22.65	30.27	14.28	47.91	55.94	39.20
29.67	40.65	18.47	25.92	36.90	14.73	44.54	55.38	33.37
33.89	43.92	23.24	32.93	42.96	22.30	48.08	58.21	37.26
14.96	24.83	3.90	13.51	23.19	2.72	27.39	38.46	14.27
24.37	34.26	13.70	22.62	32.56	12.01	36.76	45.65	26.27

Enrolment

According to the latest statistics available, the enrolment ratio[18] of Scheduled Castes students at primary stage in 1980-81 was 82.2 per cent at the all India level. In the case of girls, this ratio was 57.8 per cent. At the middle levels, the enrolment ratio was 29.1 per cent and for girls 16.2 per cent. Data in Table 4 indicates the proportion of non-enrolled children at primary and middle school stages in all states. It can be seen that while around 2 per cent of boys are out of school, the figures for girls is more than 47.80 per cent belonging to 6-11 years age. Karnataka has the maximum number of non-enrolled boys (50-80 per cent), followed by Haryana (21.60 per cent), Rajasthan (20.90 per cent), Gujarat (19.60 per cent), in the primary stage. There is a high proportion of non-enrolled girls in the primary stage in Rajasthan (86.20 per cent), Bihar (79.30 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (74.70 per cent), Haryana (73.30 per cent), and Madhya Pradesh (69.80 per cent). More than 60 per cent of the boys in the age 11-14 years are not enrolled. The states where 70 per cent and above of boys in this age group are not enrolled are Andhra Pradesh (75.30 per cent), Bihar (81.40 per cent), Nagaland (76.50 per cent), Tripura (83.70 per cent) and West Bengal (77.90 per cent). As against this, nearly 85 per cent of girls are not enrolled. States where proportion of non-enrolled girls are alarmingly high were Bihar 94 per cent, Haryana 95 per cent, Rajasthan 98 per cent, Uttar Pradesh 94 per cent and West Bengal 91 per cent.

Table 4

PROPORTION OF NON-ENROLLED CHILDREN BELONGING TO SCHEDULED CASTES AT PRIMARY AND MIDDLE STAGES

SCHEDULED CASTES

	Primary (1-V/	6-11 Years)	Middle (VI-VII/	(11-14 Years)
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
INDIA	2.10	47.80	60.60	85.20
Andhra Pradesh	*	5.50	75.30	87.90
Assam	*	20.30	29.40	55.40
Bihar	19.60	79.30	81.40	97.30
Gujarat	*	5.80	30.40	70.30
Haryana	21.60	73.30	61.50	94.80
Himachal Pradesh	*	32.80	38.90	82.60
Jammu & Kashmir	4.10	57.50	52.90	84.70
Karnataka	50.80	58.00	64.20	81.10
Kerala	*	*	*	2.40
Madhya Pradesh	17.00	69.80	62.20	92.50
Maharashtra	*	*	20.20	68.40
Manipur	*	*	36.20	55.70
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0
Nagaland	0	0	0	0
Orissa	*	44.80	76.50	93.40
Punjab	*	*	41.10	70.10
Rajasthan	20.90	86.20	68.00	98.00
Sikkum	**	*	64.70	79.00
Tamil Nadu	*	*	43.40	65.10
Tripura	*	23.10	83.70	81.50
Uttar Pradesh	17.20	74.70	60.90	94.60
West Bengal	18.80	59.80	77.90	90.90

SOURCE : Selected Education statistics–1979-80 Planning, Monitoring & Statistics Divisio[n] Ministry of Education & Culture, Department of Education. Govt. of India 198[illegible]

0 : Data Not Available.

* : Enrolment Exceed 100% in this age-group indicates that children belonging to higher age-group are enrolled at this level.

Wastage, Dropout and Retention

Besides low enrolment and literacy rates, another indicator of th[e] educational backwardness among Scheduled Caste students is their heav[y] drop out rate. Tables 5 and 6 present the data on the retention rate amon[g] general students and Scheduled Caste students at Primary level and Middl[e] school level. This evidence shows that dropout rate is much higher at th[e] Primary stage. A comparison of drop out rate between general students an[d] Scheduled Caste students indicates a higher rate among the latter.

Table 5

RATE OF RETENTION AT PRIMARY STAGE

Co-Horts	General Students Enrolment in Class I of the Base Year (Lakhs)	Enrolment Class V After Four Years (Lakhs)	Retention Rate %	SC Students Enrolment in class I of the Base Years (Lakhs)	Enrolment in Class V after four Years (Lakhs)	Retention Rate %
1967-68 to 1971-72	162.80	57.41	35.3	23.87	6.63	27.8
1968-69 to 1972-73	162.62	60.03	36.9	24.73	7.13	28.8
1969-70 to 1973-74	163.47	62.07	38.0	24.95	7.75	30.3
1970-71 to 1974-75	167.11	64.55	38.6	25.20	7.92	31.4
1971-72 to 1975-76	171.49	67.06	39.1	26.55	8.55	32.2
1972-73 to 1976-77	179.05	69.48	38.8	27.88	9.34	33.5
1973-74 to 1977-78	173.74	70.27	40.5	28.18	10.04	35.6

SOURCE : Trends of Educational Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India : 1967-68 to 1977-78.

Table 6

RETENTION RATE AT MIDDLE STAGE

Co-Horts	General Students Enrolment in Class VI of the Base year (Lakhs)	Enrolment in Class VIII after two years (Lakhs)	Retention Rate %	Scheduled Caste Students Enrolment in Class VI of the Base year (Lakhs)	Enrolment in Class VIII after two years (Lakhs)	Retention Rate %
1967-68 to 1969-70	40.86	32.09	78.5	4.55	3.15	69.2
1968-69 to 1970-71	43.16	33.22	77.0	4.57	3.27	71.5
1969-70 to 1971-72	44.25	34.03	76.9	4.71	3.33	70.7
1970-71 to 1972-73	45.53	34.99	76.9	4.82	3.53	73.2
1971-72 to 1973-74	46.80	35.97	76.9	4.86	3.52	72.4
1972-73 to 1974-75	49.15	37.26	75.8	5.16	3.76	72.8
1973-74 to 1975-76	51.39	39.09	76.1	5.41	4.05	74.9
1974-75 to 1976-77	53.83	39.83	74.0	5.85	4.38	75.1
1975-76 to 1977-78	54.38	41.05	75.5	6.24	4.76	76.3

SOURCE : Trends of Educational Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India, 1967-68 to 1977-78.

It has been suggested that these trends in literacy among the scheduled castes can be attributed to the following factors:

> "The most dominating factor relates to the proverty condition and economic hardship of the Harijan families, need to engage child power in domestic services or in gainful employment. Inability to meet the educational expenses and helplessness with regard to the provision of basic physical needs are the indicators of educational backwardness of the Harijan families. The next important reason for school drop out stems from schools and school related factors. Domestic exigencies like sickness or death in the family or long illness of the school-going child formed the third important category of drop out reasons".[19]

That poverty and economic backwardness of the scheduled castes are the main reasons for this state of affairs should be fairly obvious.

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16. *Sixth Five Year Plan, 1980-85*, Planning Commission, Government of India.
17. Constituted by Planning Commission in July 1980, submitted its report in September/October 1980.
18. Enrolment Ratio:

$$= \frac{\text{Enrolment of Scheduled Caste Students on rolls}}{\text{Population of Scheduled Caste in corresponding age group.}} \times 100$$

19. Study on "*School Dropout among Scheduled Caste Children : Causes and Cure*" conducted by Central Institute of Research and Training in Public Cooperation in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, 1975.

The New Education Policy : A Class Necessity

IT IS NECESSARY to dispel a wrong impression often observed among academicians that the education policy of a nation is framed by the educationists alone. On the contrary, an education policy to be adopted by the State emerges out of the immediate class needs of the ruling classes. The task of drafting that policy is, of course, left to the educationists and ideologues of the ruling party. This truth has to be borne in mind when we discuss the proposed new education policy of the Government of India. Besides, the education policy has to be considered along with the socio-economic conditions obtaining at a given time.

In each report of the dozens of education commissions, UGC meetings and conferences etc., since independence, there were loud slogans of mass education, education related to life and social production, cultural-spiritual development of the individuals, linkage between manual and mental labour and so on. The national education policy adopted in 1968 also envisaged these ideals. But all these pious formulations have remained on paper and the loud slogans proved deceptive. On the one hand, the outlay and expenditure on education have gradually declined in the successive plans (First Plan, 7.2 per cent of the GNP, Sixth Plan, 2.6 per cent) and the constitutional directive to achieve free and compulsory education for all children in the 6-14 years age group has been abandoned. On the other hand, there has been greater and greater centralization of education culminating in transfer of education from the State List to the Concurrent List of the Constitution during the dark days of Emergency. Effective decentralisation of educational policy implementations in order to achieve rapid and uniform spread of education in such a country of vast cultural–lingual varieties as well as regional imbalances, has been totally ignored. The necessity to keep up the policy of 'divide and rule' through sustenance of regional imbalances and people's backwardness is readily understandable.

In an attempt to further influence the educational processes effectively, the set of guidelines and suggestions apparently constituting the New Education Policy (NEP) present certain striking new features. Before we spell out these, it would, however, be naive to think that the ruling classes can forever remain indifferent towards the present stage of drift and ad-hocism. Education, while increasing the productive capacity of an individual, also raises his consciousness and social awareness. Spread of education, howsoever unplanned, aimless and limited, has certainly made a large section of the

educated disillusioned with the capitalist path of development being pursued. These sections are gradually joining the left and democratic movement in search of an alternative to the present system of exploitation of man by man. This trend threatens the very survival of the ruling classes. Further, the crisis-ridden economy controlled by them cannot absorb the turnout of educated manpower and investments made by the State towards education do not yield profitable returns. Hence the necessity to have a new education policy that protects the needs of the ruling classes and strengthens their position economically, organisationally, politically and ideologically is not difficult to understand.

The salient features of the NEP as envisaged in the document "Challenge of Education" are the following:

i) the words 'free' and 'compulsory' are dropped in the scheme of 'universal elementary education' (Section 4.72).

ii) restricting education after class VIII to only the 'most meritorious' students and their nurture in model schools/centres of excellence; the rest of the students are to be sent to vocational streams, non-formal education and open universities (4.23).

iii) the "most meritorious" students in higher education shall acquire knowledge and skills for assimilating the 'continuing revolution in the world of technology', meaning thereby, high technology as developed in Western Europe, USA and Japan (1.2 & 4.1).

iv) use of high technology devices for 'distance teaching' methods (whereupon the electronic teacher shall substitute the class-room teacher) (4.33–4.36).

v) delinking of jobs from degrees (in order to do away with the problem of providing jobs to the educated unemployed and to further legitimise corruption and nepotism of the employers) (4.84).

vi) total centralisation of all educational matters; national core curriculum.

vii) de-affiliation of the colleges; code of conduct for teachers as envisaged in the "Hospitals and Other Institutions Bill"; new management pattern in colleges and universities along the line of Central University Acts; curb on all political and other trade union rights in the name of depoliticisation of the campus (4.130–4.133 & 4.135).

viii) allocation of resources (presently less than a percent of the union budget) not to be increased; privatisation of educational institutions (4.45 & 4.69); mobilization of voluntary agencies for implementation of educational policies (4.81).

ix) complete moratorium on opening of new colleges and universities or new courses in the existing ones (4.123); withdrawal of all subsidies for higher education other than that for research (4.134).

These policy prescriptions have emerged out of the contemporary needs of the ruling classes. In the face of the economic crisis, the government has

adopted a strategy of relying heavily on import of western technology in order to minimise cost of production and maintain high rates of profit. Ever since the new Government of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was formed, this reliance on high technology and its inflow from the imperialist camp has assumed dramatic proportions. The budget for 1985-86, the liberalisation of controls on imports, grant of unprecedented concessions to the private sector, an open door policy to the multinational corporations and the document of the Seventh Plan (1985-90) all reflect this strategy. In the name of rapid modernisation of the economy and march towards the 21st century with dignity and "alleviation of poverty", a virtual repudiation of national self-reliance is evident in the new policy shifts.

The new economic policies adopted by the Union Government will create a need for the manpower capable of manning the industries as well as agriculture based upon the input of imported technology. It is, therefore, aimed at producing "sophisticated manpower in adequate numbers to deal creatively with new technologies" (4.144). In other words, only the 'employables' in the given economic structure. The investments are termed 'productive' in that sense only. The New Education Policy is geared towards this end. It is, in fact, a strategy that requires a small number of intellectual manpower trained in modern methods while the vast masses can remain illiterate and at best half-educated. The fate of the majority cannot be anything else because, in the absence of employment opportunities, vocationalisation of education in the secondary stage and afterwards, becomes infructuous. Very few people would be drawn towards it. Similarly, interest in non-formal and continuing education facilities also cannot be generated unless there are scopes for gainful employment. What is of greater concern is that non-formal education is driven towards replacing formal education although it should be no more than a support programme. In the name of 'human resource development' (a catchy slogan indeed), the vast majority of students are to be thrown into a blind alley while only a select few are to be imparted the best possible education, knowledge and skills corresponding to the needs of the existing economic system. This policy would, therefore, further accentuate the elitism already present in our educational system and society.

It may be relevant, at this stage, to refer to the Seventh Plan (1985-90) document adopted by the Peoples Republic of China. The government of the PRC has embarked on a path of rapid modernisation of the country in all possible respects in order to transform itself into a developed socialist state by the end of the country. It has been stated that "economic contruction, social development and scientific and technological progress depend on further growth of education based on economic development" and, therefore, "in the next five years, universities and colleges will turn out 2.6 million graduates through regular or special college courses, 70 per cent more than covered by Sixth Plan, and 200,000 through P.G.courses, an increase of more than 400 per cent. . . . China needs to train two million specialised personnel with cultural, scientific and technological quali-

fications at or above the level of graduates from technical colleges, a growth of 150 per cent over the Sixth Plan period. (Planning—released by the embassy of the PRC, New Delhi, October 9, 1985). An all out effort for realising rapid agricultural and industrial growth coupled with modernisation in methods of production has been organically linked with spread of higher education both in terms of quality and quantity. Socialist China has no unemployment problem and hence the population (one billion) is regarded as an asset for the socialist modernisation of the country.

It is in this context that the new educational policy for the People's Republic of China was made public on May 27, 1985. The document was a decision of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee on the reform of the educational system and was formulated on the basis of an exhaustive study by over 10,000 experts. The draft policy was revised eleven times before it was finally released. The three-part plan calls for (i) a more rapid expansion of the 9-year compulsory school system (ii) the extension of secondary technical education and (iii) more autonomy for colleges and universities. (Educational Reforms, issued by the Information Office of the Embassy of PRC, New Delhi, January 25, 1986).

In a single year 1984, institutes of higher learning enrolled 23,000 postgraduates, 7000 more than in 1983. There were 57,000 postgraduates studying in the country–20,000 more than the previous year. Universities and colleges enrolled 4,75,000 students in 1984,84,000 more tha in 1983, These institutes had a total student body of 1,396,000 in 1984—1,98,000 more than in 1983. In 1984, there were 2,87,000 students graduates from these colleges. The total student body in adult higher education institutions (including T.V. and Radio College courses, correspondence courses, evening schools and part-time colleges for workers, peasants, managerial personnel and middle-school teachers) was 1,292,000 in 1984–3,66,000 more than the year before. The number of students enrolled in the secondary schools, middle and primary schools, agricultural middle schools, vocational middle schools and workers' training schools as well as their output also increased substantially in each year of the Sixth Five Year Plan (1981-85) overfulfilling targets. (Communique on fulfillment of China's Economic and Social Development Plan, Information office, Embassy of the PRC, New Delhi, April 22, 1985. Also see News From China. No. 42, October 8, 1985).

Thus we see that in China, development of human resources. means development of productivity of every individual through education, training and employment while in India, it means restriction of education to a select few, the 'employables' in a decadent capitalist economy. Education in India is being converted into a process of churning out trained technicians to be productively employed to give instant private returns to the employers. An approach like this will neither develop the vast human resources that exist nor will it accelerate economic growth and all-round modernisation in the long run.

No one can deny the necessity of a thorough restructuring of the present

educational system. But it needs to be remembered that such changes can be brought about without changes in the total socio-economic struct itself. The framers of the document 'Challenge of Education' cannot unaware of this. It is true that 'Challenge of Education' does highlight m: of the maladies. But it only raises questions and avoids its solution under cover of mere slogans. It is also full of contradictions. For example, crowding in of institutions of higher learning has been discussed at length. true that many students join colleges and universities because they have where else to go. But should we only blame these people and call th crowds ? Had there been employment opportunities for undergraduates a graduates, the so-called crowding would have disappeared. However, i also true that only about 4.8 per cent of our population in the age group 21 years (3.31) receive higher education and that enrolment in hig education increased only at the rate of 3.8 per cent in the seventies as cc pared to 13.4 per cent in the sixties (2.14). Hence, the so-called 'crowdinį primarily due to the highly inadequate number of institutions for hig learning as well as lack of employment opportunities. The document d not say a word about the failure of the political and economic system to cre jobs for our young people but, on the contrary, it chooses the easy way ou condemning these people as "unemployables" and hold the unemplo themselves responsible for their plight (3.63 & 4.83). It also suggests a cc plete moratorium on opening of new colleges and universities other than 'centres for excellence'.

The new education policy, therefore, is an eloquent manifestation of contemporary needs of the ruling classes and reflects the bankrupt patl development pursued by them. The policy of restricting education in it and the series of proposals attacking the democratic rights of the acade community pose a big danger to the democratic movement. This danger to be properly understood particularly since it is being camouflaged un populist slogans of modernisation and preparing the country for the 2 century. Education for all, jobs for all; free and compulsory education secondary stage; state take over of private education; education in mot tongue at all levels; placing education on the state list; higher allocatior resources for education (at least 6 per cent of GNP, 10 per cent of Un Budget, 30 per cent of State Budget and 10 per cent of Plan expenditure these requirements should be the basis of an alternative educat policy.

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The Significance Of DUTA Strike

IE DELHI University Teachers' Association (DUTA) has, over the years, ne to occupy an important place in the teachers movement in the country. tly, this is a reflection of the public visibility of happenings in the Capital; at goes unnoticed in a district town can create waves in the Capital. Again, lhi University itself has developed a reputation of sorts, if not for olarship alone, at least for holding examinations in time and sending a ge number of its students into the civil service, finance and business and s reputation has given the Teachers' Association some measure of dibility and bargaining power. Also, the University's own special history– fact that its colleges are constituents of the University and every college cher too is recognised as a teacher of the University–has given a specific racter to the unity of college and departmental teachers and inculcated a nmitment to the 'federal' structure of the University and to parity between iversity and college teachers.

Over the years, the teachers movement in the University has come to be ognised as one of the leading segments of the democratic movement. The TA has, to its credit, the distinction of being one of the first associations to w public attention to and agitate on issues like the Hospital & Other titutions Bill, the UGC's Central Universities Review Committee's JRC) Report, the 'New Education Policy' etc.

Given this background, and given also the fact that DUTA's strike cember 10, 1985 to February 26, 1986) coincided with the government nsored and manipulated 'debate' on the New Education Policy, it is hardly prising that the DUTA's strike has been seen as a foretaste ofthe forth- ning battles over education policy. That the teachers have come out of the ke stronger than before, more militant than before and with greater lic sympathy than before, is a good augury for the day to come.

There were two key demands of the strike, the full and complete hon- ing of the 1983 agreement (arrived at in January 1983 after a prolonged days strike) and initiation of decisive steps towards democratisation of University.

The four points of the January 1983 Agreement were a) a continuing ta free merit promotion scheme b) housing schemes c) stagnation oval for selection grade teachers and d) introduction of professor's grade

in colleges. Of the four points, only one, relating to merit promotion ha been implemented till December 1985. With regard to the other three though the University bodies had gone through all the formalities implementation was no where in sight, though three years had elapsed.

As far as democratisation was concerned, the University's own Executiv Council had formed a committee headed by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and th committee had submitted a *unanimous interim report*. Yet, within th framework of the new policies for 'de-politicization', for the replacement o the election principle by the nomination principle (as far as membership o university bodies was concerned)–these interim recommendations wen unacceptable.

Essentially, therefore, none of the teachers' demands were new Everyone of them had the sanction of university bodies and moreover, th 1983 Agreement had the concurrence of the UGC and the Ministry of Educa tion as well.

Numerous delegations and letters to the authorities had failed to pro duce any results. At no stage was the question raised as to the scope and validity of the 1983 Agreement; always, there was the talk of unfortunate delay and promise of speedy implementation. Yet, suddenly, the merit pro motion scheme, which had in the course of implementation been included in the Delhi University statute book as part of teachers' service conditions, was withdrawn through a circular from the UGC. Teachers saw this as the fina insult. The authorities were clearly violating the 1983 Agreement and throw ing into doubt the very credibility of the DUTA. Teachers demanded ful implementation of the 1983 Agreement and resolution of other out standing issues.

The DUTA strike went on for 75 days–from December 10, 1985 to Feb ruary 22, 1986. It attracted wide public attention and received prime-time TV coverage (biased no doubt) on at least three occasions. All prominent newspapers carried editorials, some of them more than once during the strike. Trade unions, Public Sector employees associations, and of course teachers associations from all over India expressed solidarity and undertook protest actions. The students, despite the manipulations of the ruling party, remained, by and large, with the teachers, even courting arrest with them when the need arose.

The strike went through two clearly demarcated phases–the first from December 10, 1985 to January 22, 1986 and the second from January 22, 1986 to February 22, 1986.

Since all other forms of appeal had failed, the DUTA general body meet ing of September 29, 1985 demanded "concrete and specific steps" for meet ing unfulfilled promises and clearly told the authorities that if such measures were not taken, teachers would have "no option but to take recourse to direct action". After waiting for more than two months and seeing that nothing was being done to implement the 1983 Agreement, the General Body of the DUTA decided to start an indefinite strike from December 10, 1985.

After more than a month's struggle, it had become clear by the third week of January that, of the points of the 1983 Agreement, a solution had been worked out on three. But the UGC had refused to actually consider the question of professors' grade; they only promised they would only if the strike was withdrawn. On the demand for democratization, only some general promises were made. To this was added an unmistakable threat; if the teachers continued their strike, they would be crushed.

The authorities began an unprecendented offensive against the teachers. The view point of the VC and the UGC received wide coverage in the television. It was only later that the news media fully supported the teachers' position through editorials and articles.

On February 22, 1986, having demonstrated its strength, having withstood the authorities' offensive, the DUTA decided to withdraw its strike so as to save the students from losing an academic year and in order to preserve the precious unity of the organisation. DUTA finalised its programme for making up the loss of teaching days. This was then passed by the University Academic Council on February 26, 1986.

What the Strike has Achieved

The teachers have established the truthfulness of their case. They have proved their concern for education as well as their commitment to their organisation.

During the first phase, by January 22, 1986, they had obtained written commitments : that the merit promotion scheme would continue, that the housing scheme would be passed, that selection grade teachers would get relief, that the UGC contribution to the University's revolving fund for house building advances would be enhanced from Rs. 50 lakhs per year to Rs. 1 crore per year, that committees would be set up on problems related to research, to temporary teachers and on extending university rules to professional colleges, that the time-limit for acquiring Ph. D/M. Phil would be raised from 8 years to 10 years.

Yet, in retrospect, the biggest achievements came, not in the first, but in the second phase of the strike. It was in this phase that the DUTA matured as an organisation, that the teachers' fighting capacity was put to test, that the real issues of the strike and of the struggles to come, came into the limelight.

Teachers are often portrayed as weak, disorganised and incapable of struggle. This strike has exposed that kind of propaganda. Despite the repression unleashed by the authorities, the teachers held on. They preserved the unity of their organisation and they withdrew their strike of their own choice, in good order.

The strike has also shown that, despite their hypocritical talk about teachers being "gurus" and "nation-builders", the authorities have the same approach to teachers struggle as they do to the struggles of other sections of the working people. Every possible weapon was used against the teachers,

ranging from misinformation and slander to threats and repression. It is even more important to note that such tactics were really stepped up after January 22, 1986 when, more clearly than before, DUTA's demands were linked with the growing opposition to the New Education Policy. DUTA's strike has shown that new education policies are indeed underway and that these policies will be the focal points for the teachers' and students' struggles of the days to comes.

Since the Central Government has declared its intention of placing the 'New Education Policy' in its final form during the current session of Parliament, since one key element in that policy, namely the Mehrotra Pay Committee Report is likely to be available in late April or early May, it is vital that the issues raised by DUTA's strike be clearly understood :—

It has become clear that in the eyes of the authorities, university autonomy is an 'outmoded' concept. The CURC Report had referred to university autonomy as an anomalous remnant of our colonial past. In the new scheme of things, university bodies will be of no consequence, all decisions of any significance will be taken by the UGC.

There is to be no extension of democratic participation in decision making; on the contrary, the new policy seeks to bind the teachers hand and foot, to deprive them of their freedom of expression, of association and of protest. This is evident from the multi-pronged official propaganda about depoliticization and the need for a teachers' code of conduct. The National Commission on Teachers and the CURC have both set out a code of conduct and these ideas have been given a green signal in the August 1985 document "Challenge of Education"

Comprehensive central legislation on the lines of the CURC is in the offing. The aim is to do away with elections to university bodies; instead, nominations are to be resorted to. This became clear from DUTA's talks with the former UGC Chairperson on January 10, 1986.

The entire structure of university and college functioning will be sought to be changed. The 'Challenge' document had only repeated the old complaints about Universities growing under the weight of the colleges. It had also claimed that the system of affiliated colleges itself was an anomalous one, another remnant from the colonial past. Now the Central Government's thinking has taken a quantum jump. The Education Ministry's 'Discussion Paper' presented at the State Education Ministers Conference on January 23-24, 1986, states that universities will not even remain examining bodies. Instead, colleges are to evaluate and give degrees to their own students, with the 'market' deciding on the relative weight and significance of different colleges' degrees. The vital link between undergraduate and post-graduate education is to be snapped.

College governing bodies and trusts are to be given all rights to hire and fire. Various University rules protecting teachers security of service are to be abolished. The ground is thus to be prepared for a full scale privatisation of

higher education. The parity between lecturers and Class I government servants in regard to pay scales, HRA, CCA and Interim Relief is to be done away with wherever it exists. The UGC's withdrawal of bonus from Delhi teachers in December 1985 makes this abundantly clear.

Teachers will have to submit themselves to confidential reports and regular eight yearly scrutiny. The purpose is that "recalcitrant element" should be deprived of pay increments to keep them in line. The crossing of these efficiency bars will be called "*vertical mobility*". DUTA's strike has shown that this will be one of the key issues in the days to come in all colleges and universities. This concept will be used to deprive teachers of their hard won right to promotion; those who have been promoted to the teachers grade will stand to be demoted; and this concept will be used to destroy the parity between university and college teachers.

Talk of improvement in teaching and research is a mere smokescreen. This is evident from the way in which the government rejected DUTA's eminently sensible and academically sound demand for the introduction of Professors' Grade in colleges. The introduction of such a grade would have been a great incentive, a fine method of encouraging and nurturing talent; yet it was not found acceptable. The authorities have referred the Professors Grade issue to the Mehrotra Committee but the official comments are enough to indicate that all they intend is to bury the Professors Grade demand.

Fundamentally, the DUTA strike has shown that in the eyes of the authorities, education is not a right, higher education is not a facility, the opportunity for which should be equally available to all citizens. Rather, for the authorities, higher education is a burden which should, as speedily as possible, be shifted into the more 'efficient' private sector. And the private sector will be given a free hand to fleece the people through higher fees, capitation fees etc. Except in those highly specialised, exclusive, technical areas which will produce the manpower necessary for the new administrative, technical and management structure, in all other areas, higher education will be curtailed. The products are, after all, in the language of the "Challenge", "unemployables". These changes are bound to affect not only the teachers but all sections of Indian people. The educational system will face its greatest challenge in the history of independent India.

The teachers movement in Delhi has come out of this strike far stronger, united and determined than ever before. But, most of all, it has become far more aware of the challenges it faces. If DUTA's strike has played a role in creating this awareness not only in Delhi University but also in other Universities and among the people at large, this itself should be counted as the biggest achievement of the struggle.

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AT FIRST sight, the post-independence student movement in India presen an extremely fragmented and incoherent picture. The unity of the stude community that was achieved in the struggle against the imperialist plu derers of this country, appears to lie in shambles. Though the original AIS which was founded in 1936 had undergone a couple of splits prior Independence, particularly during the 1942 Quit India movement, it st remained the premier student organisation.

With the removal of the main target of this movement, namely Britis imperialism, from the scene and with the crystallization of different politic trends, the student movement, too, went into disarray. The "sacred duty"[1] fighting British imperialism, as Nehru had called it, had come to an en Independence raised new hopes, new expectations.

Though Nehru's "sacred duty" theory had been decisively rejected by big section of students who had come to the conclusion that there can be n genuine freedom without socialism, yet even among them, confusion starte gaining ground. Was Nehru a progressive ? Was he really intending to buil socialism, as the Avadi Session of the Congress had declared ? Was the pat of heavy industrialisation through the public sector, really intended to buil socialism ? A section of the left, within the student movement too, starte wavering. From this point onwards, the student movement as such becam enmeshed in numerous controversies and started searching for a new direc tion. Here, it would not be out of place to mention that it was through suc cessive disillusionments with the Gandhian leadership of the India National Congress (INC)—its reluctance to raise the slogan of complet Independence, its vacillation during the non-cooperation and civil di obedience movements—that large sections of the youth realized that com plete Independence is not what the INC is interested in. They had als realized that only socialism could guarantee full independence. The recor of the Congress leaders and their attitudes towards students, after the entered ministries in 1937, further added to this belief.[2]

The developments of the period following the attainment of Indepen dence brought before the democratic student movement, another importa question. Socialism is all right, but how is it to be attained? Throug collaboration with the Nehru government or through a relentless struggl against it, shoulder to shoulder with the working class, peasantry and othe

toiling sections ? Needless to say, these controversies were not confined merely to the students. The entire left movement, the communist movement in particular, was debating these issues.

For almost two decades, when the democratic student movement was thus engaged in re-charting out its future course and perspective through bitter controversy and struggle, the ruling classes were sharpening their ideological weapons and sermonizing the students to eschew all politics, study and join the new 'sacred' task : of nation building.

The mid-sixties were a tumultous period in comtemporary Indian history. An unprecedented economic crisis, characterised by industrial recession, food shortage with near famine conditions faced the country. Mass outbursts of anger, demonstrations for food, strikes, bandhs, involving several crore people, broke out. Students assumed their rightful place and at many times were in the forefront of the struggle. Police repression, lathi charges, firing could not deter them. The following reports present a scenario of resistance and struggle :

"Students, except those who are sent to expensive public schools, are faced with overcrowded classes, not enough classrooms and playgrounds, not enough teachers, and those who are ill-paid. Increasing tuition fees and text book prices have created a situation in which students are finding that their guardians are more and more unable to give them education."[3]

"...Students are coming forward to champion the cause of the people and suffer for it. In Assam and Bengal, they were shot down for supporting the popular demand for food, in U.P., they were repressed for demonstrating their solidarity with the employees of the state government."[4]

In Andhra, for seven days continuously, a massive unsurge shook the state. Demanding that the fifth Steel Plant be installed in Vishakhapatnam, since Andhra was an industrially neglected state, students took to the streets. For seven days, all schools and colleges remained closed.[5]

This upsurge of the mid-sixties, perhaps, clarified the doubts of many who still thought that the Congress was serious about a 'socialistic pattern of society.'

It is from this period onwards that one perceives a new trend in the organized democratic student movement which began to discuss and agitate on issues related to education policy. More specifically, towards the end of the decade and with the formation of the Student Federation of India (SFI) on an all-India basis, meeting a historical necessity, serious efforts were made in formulating a new approach towards education policy in India. This is not to deny the good work of the regional Students' Federations. For example, the 12th state conference of UPSF held on 12-13 June'66, passed a resolution condemning the Indo-U.S. Education Foundation, calling on students to resist it. The 19th Bengal Pradesh SF State Conference held in 25-28 December 1967 in Siliguri demanded a truly democratic and production oriented education system, an extension of the U.F. Government's policy of free

education upto class VIII to the secondary stage, student representation in governing bodies of Colleges and University senates, and so on—but the major pre-occupation was of resolving the most important question on which depended everything else, including the approach to the education policy.

It is perhaps relevant to emphasise that the student movement, by its very nature, differs from the movement of basic classes—the working class or the peasantry. This difference is due to the simple fact that the students are not a class. Whereas the working class or the peasantry as a class has its own demands—economic and political, the case with a multi-class group like students is entirely different.

It is for this reason that while there may exist pro-ruling class organisations and trade unions among the workers and peasants, they can hardly ignore some of the basic demands of the particular class. Thus the INTUC, or BMS too may be dragged into united actions where basic class demands are concerned. The situation is slightly more complex in the kisan movement where, as a result of the differentiation among the peasantry, one 'peasant' organisation may differ from another. Thus, a kisan organization of say the Lok Dal or Sharad Joshi's Shetkari Sangathan may infact represent a different strata and class interests than the AIKS or the AIAWU. However, some scope still exists for an all-in peasant unity since the common exploitation of the peasantry by the landlord *does* offer the basis for a common movement. This was particularly true at the time of independence when a wider basis for an all-in unity existed. Thus, while the Telengana armed struggle or the Tebhaga struggle could force some policy matters to the fore and place *'land reform'* on the agenda, the united working class could beat back the offensive of say, the Industrial Relations Bill.

In the case of the student movement, however, debates, protests and struggles have had a more sporadic and spontaneous character. It is true, though, that there are some common demands of the student community too, e.g. the demand for free and compulsory education, expansion of facilities, syllabi and examination reform etc. But these too are questions which students who have entered education are not so acutely or directly affected by. It requires a certain amount of democratic consciousness, a minimum political awareness to be inculcated, before any real movement can be built around them. Here, the question of the forms of struggle is also important. It would be a serious mistake to think that a strike action by the working class or agricultural workers is in any way comparable to a strike action by students.

For reasons already mentioned, namely, the fact that they constitute the basic classes, the working class and the peasantry have a certain clout. When the working class goes on strike in any industry—it means a loss to the capitalists in sheer economic terms, or to the landlord when his labourers refuse to work—it is an expression of the class struggle. Not so with the principal of a college or a university Vice-Chancellor.

The multi-class student community, on the contrary, represents an extremely volatile section, receptive to all sorts of ideas and ideals. It, therefore, often reacts more to purely political issues with great fervour. Students are as easily drawn into a revolutionary upsurge, as the experience of student demonstrations in Russia or the historic anti-imperialist May 4th movement of China demonstrate, as they are drawn into fascist movements, as in the case of the Hitler Youth Movement. The Soweto Student uprising of 1976 or the recent student upsurges against the ruling fascist clique of South Korea amply demonstrate this truth. Nearer home, the massive student upsurge in Bangladesh in 1983 or earlier on, in the 1951 language movement, too, were inspired more by the Bengali nationalist sentiment against the Islamization of education and for the recognition of Bengali as a state language.

The experience of our country, too, is not very different. The upsurge of the mid-sixties only further illustrates this basic fact. So do the Nav Nirman agitation of Gujarat and the JP led movement in Bihar, which were directed mainly against price-rise and corruption. This same student community which has these glorious struggles (albeit with limitations regarding the perspective) to its credit, can also play an altogether different role. It can, with equal ease, form the platform—rather, a reactionary platform, of Assamese national chauvinism like the AASU in the latter part of the seventies or of Khalistani ideology like the AISSF (though its leadership may not really be students, it does draw support from the student and youth). The fact that the anti-reservation agitation in Gujarat also began from the campuses is not a coincidence.

This long diversion, in our discussion, was necessitated by the need to highlight a distinctive trait of the student community. For it is an analysis of this that must form the basis of any scientific attempt at studying the history of the student movement. It was an historic occasion when the Bengal Provincial Students' Federation (BPSF), the most influential students organisation in West Bengal, took the initiative and issued an appeal in Mid-1970 for the formation of an all-India organisation. A draft programme was adopted by the SFI at its founding conference in Trivandrum in December 1970. This programme summed up the historical experience of the Indian student movement. It seriously attempted to grapple with the problems of the education system and policy. Steering clear of the issue-based or often non-issue based, sporadic politics that had so far dominated the post-Independence scenario, the Programme stated,

"The Students' Federation of India realises the urgent necessity of overhauling the present education system and developing a scientific and democratic system of education. . . ."[6]

For the first time a comprehensive charter of demands was placed before the students. On all important questions like free and compulsory education upto the secondary stage, recognition of mother-tongue as the medium of instruction, scrapping of the three language formula, syllabi

reform, examination reform, democratic rights and participation of students in decision-making bodies, opposition to private stranglehold over education, inadequate allocation of funds and interferrence of the Central Government in education and so on, the programme, unequivocally gave a scientific direction.[7] While dealing with the education system, it also clearly stated that "....The student movement constitutes a current and a component part of the wider democratic movement of the workers and peasants and other progressive forces."[8]

The formation of the SFI thus was a historic turning point, in this respect. The next four years, till the second SFI conference held in Calcutta, constitute a period of intense struggle to put this programme into practice. The huge demonstration in Kerala in November 1971 against striking down of important clauses in the University Act passed by the United Front Government, involved tens of thousands of students. Struggles demanding cancellation of SSLC examination fees, abolition of capitation fees, radical syllabus reforms, prevention of police from entering colleges were carried out.[9].

In Tamil Nadu's Annamalai University, in Andhra, Orissa, Tripura, Bihar, Assam, Punjab and Karnataka, struggles were conducted on various problems of the student community.[10] The demands ranged from opening of more colleges, increase in teaching staff, in Tripura, to arresting price rise, examption of fees for students from drought-affected or flood-affected areas in Assam and Tripura and so on. Institution—based struggles were also initiated during this period. Cheaper education, cheap books, cheap kerosene—all these were demands that directly flowed from the policy perspective of the organisation. It is not possible here to catalogue all the struggle on various political, anti-authoritarian and anti-imperialist issues. Suffice it to say that important struggles did take place.

While this was the picture in the rest of the country, the democratic movement and naturally, the democratic student movement in West Bengal too faced serious attacks. Naked semi-fascist terror was unleashed. The Congress-Naxalite attacks on the 'bourgeois education system' vitiated all normal academic atmosphere in the state. Democratic rights were abrogated, students unions captured by anti-socials, attacks on libraries, laboratories and even on teachers and students activists became a daily phenomenon. "Mass copying is our birthright" became the Congress hoodlums' slogan. Amidst threats of physical liquidation, SFI stood in defense of education Fight against anarchy in education became a key task. It is not only today, when the Left Front Government is in office that SFI is 'by proxy' defending normalcy on campuses—as many would seem to think. It all began then. It flowed from the programmatic understanding of the SFI. It was during this period that the SFI in August 1973 built up a big struggle in West Bengal against the irrational syllabus proposed by the Congress Government. In 1974, a 72-hour all Bengal student strike was a historical event, in that period of terror.

The second All-India Conference of the SFI held in January, 1974,

adopted a resolution on "Mass Education". This resolution further concretized the stand on policy issues and even presented an alternative policy. This comprehensive resolution was not merely a critique of the education policy of the ruling classes but also represented a reaction of the democratic student movement to the Draft Fifth Plan and the place given to education in it. Much of what is now coming in the garb of the 'new' education policy was contained in an embryo in the Fifth Plan draft. e.g. 'model schools' and the parallel stream of education for the elite.[11] While this resolution presented an alternative, it also cautioned about some serious trends which turned out to be prophetic !.

"*The Central Government wants to keep its dominance over university education by keeping a large percentage of finances in its hands and distribute through UGC, to its favourite institutions.* It wants to concentrate on post-graduate research scholars and to *develop a few selected colleges and university centres* to get the necessary cadres for its administrative and capitalist apparatus."[12]

This resolution became literally a weapon of the democratic student movement—a guide for struggle.

The imposition of internal emergency in 1975 June, saw a change in the form of the movement and its struggles. Within severe limitations and amidst repression, the SFI carried forward its struggle in new forms to suit the changed situation.[16]

Among the major attacks on education during the emergency was the placing of education on the Concurrent list—thus opening the way for open and blatant interference by the Centre.

The withdrawal of the Emergency and the installation of the Janata Government in 1977, on the crest of a popular anti-authoritarian upsurge, opened up new possibilities of struggle. The demands for dismantling the authoritarian structure built up by the Congress, and withdrawal of all the black measures became the central demands of all democratic forces. Opportunities had also opened up to debate afresh the entire education policy. Against this background, the SFI took the lead in organising an All-India Convention in Delhi on December 19-20, 1977. Attended by over a thousand delegates from all over the country, the convention demanded that the entire authoritarian framework in education be dismantled, education be restored in the States list, democratic decision making and education through the mother tongue be implemented.

With new fervour, the democratic student movement surged ahead. Serious attempts were initiated by the SFI to utilize the new situation to draw in other student organisations on the common demands of the student community. The Patna Conference of the SFI in February 1979 was a landmark in this respect. For the first time after Independence, student and youth organisations of various political tendencies were brought together in an All-India Convention Against Illiteracy and Unemployment, in Delhi on July 22, 1979. The call of the convention was carried to the states. State level campaigns and struggles were initiated. It is to the credit of the SFI that it played

the key role in involving all shades of political trends on common demands relating to education and unemployment. The turn of the decade saw serious rise of divisive trends amongst the student community in particular, and Indian polity in general. The AASU led-agitation in Assam assumed serious proportions challenging the democratic rights of minorities. Hindu chauvinism and Islamic fundamentalism too, started raising their heads. This was partly evidenced in the Janata Government's bid to withdraw four secular history text books and boost communal historiography. It was also seen later, in the fanatical attacks on the eminent historican, Irfan Habib, by Islamic fundamentalists. The SFI seriously met this challenge, campaigned. demonstrated and emerged as a champion of secularism and democracy.

In this background, the SFI seriously analysed the situaiton and came to the conclusion that it was the need of the hour to resist these trends by positively putting forward a programme of uniting the student and youth on their common demands. At the initiative of the SFI and DYFI, an All India Student—Youth Action Committee was formed. This was in preparation of the now historic September 15, 1981 Student–Youth rally, in which thousands upon thousands of students and youth marched to Parliament demanding "Jobs for All, Education for All." The struggle against the bankrupt education policy of the government and its wrong priorities (of ignoring mass education) became a mass movement with this action. The slogan "Jobs for All, Education for All" caught the imagination of crores of youth and students, so much so that many other organisations started adopting it.

Today, when the government is talking of a new education policy—a reactionary, anti-people policy, the student movement is facing a most serious challenge. While trying to keep the intelligentsia, students, and teachers busy with a so-called democratic debate, the government is proceeding ahead already and implementing it. This 'policy' which aims at destroying education, which for the first time absolves the government and state of any responsibility of free and universal education, constitutes one of the greatest challenges, not only to the academic community, but to the people at large for those whose children will never be able to enter the highly guarded portals of education and have to be content with watching TV or Video.

But the democratic student movement is taking up the challenge. The SFI has not confined itself to academic debates of this or that proposal of the policy. It has begun a massive campaign in the student community for the coming struggle. In the coming days, the colleges and universities will have to be made the battle ground for offering the stiffest resistance.

Already, the campaign and struggle are warming up. Students are positively responding to this campaign. Even in a state like Delhi with a relatively weaker student movement, the campaign and subsequent demonstration at the Education Ministry and a strike in JNU show that the response is positive. In a state like West Bengal with a strong student movement, the entire student community had observed a statewide strike on

October 10, 1985. Continuous campaigns are on. Mass meetings and demonstrations are taking place. The response of the student community there is decisively against this reactionary policy. So much so, that in the recent elections to college unions, on this one issue, SFI has been able to snatch 21 college unions from the Chhatra Parishad. There is no doubt that the student movement will decisively reject this new offensive.

1 Suneet Chopra; Political Consciousness and Student Movement in India. *Social Scientist*, May, 1978

2 *Ibid*

3 *People's Democracy* "Stop this shooting of students", November 6 1966

4 *CPI(M) Central Committee Resolution, People's Democracy*, November, 1966

5 *People's Democracy* December 11, 1966

6 *SFI Programme*

7 *Ibid*, Charter of Demands

8 *Ibid*

9 M.A Baby, Decade of Dedicated Students' Struggles-I, in *Student Struggle*, 1980 Dec-Jan 1981

10 *Ibid*

11 Kumaresh Chakravorty, "Education and Fifth Five Year Plan" *Social Scientist*, October 1972

Madhusudan Chakravorty, Model Schools: Objective and Significance" (Bengali) *Ganashakti, October 1, 1985*

11 *SFI 2nd Conference, Resolution on Mass Education*

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Book Review

Adult Education

COMBATING POVERTY THROUGH ADULT EDUCATION : National Development Strategies, CHRIS DUKE (ed.), Croom Helm, 1985, pp. 255

THIS VOLUME is brought out under the auspices of the International Council for Adult Education, "a non-governmental, voluntary partnership of people and organisations working together to promote the education and the learning of adults for responsible, human-centred social and economic development."[1] One wonders why such an organisation was necessary, when there is already UNESCO, whose success in the field has reduced both the Reagan Administration and Mrs. Thatcher to opting out of that valid international forum.

It appears also that the promoters of this forum, with its head-quarters conveniently situated in Canada, are at variance with UNESCO's "concept and target of universal literacy by the year 2000, despite scepticism among its advisers whether this is a realistic platform."[2] And in support of its position, it states the conclusions of a West German Agency that has "questioned the commitment to and unintended consequences of mass literacy campaigns."[3]

And what is their claim ? They say there is no proof that "literacy was historically a prerequisite of economic and social development; that literacy efforts have of themselves diminished exploitation and poverty; that literacy is a prerequisite for the intelligent understanding and handling of life; or that it necessarily and directly relates to attaining participative structures, achieving liberation and abolishing oppression."[4]

It is obvious that the authors of this conclusion are seeing literacy as divorced from the context in which it is evolving. To keep the debate academic, it would be worthwhile to look at the historical context of literacy and illiteracy as explained by EP Thompson in *The Making of the English Working Class*, "Illiteracy, exhaustion, the emigration from the village of the ambitious, the sharp-witted and the young, the shadow of the squire and the parson, the savage punishment of enclosure or bread rioters-all combined to induce fatalism and to inhibit the articulation of grievances."[5]

On the other hand, while it is obvious that in its earliest and most brutal phase of industrialisation *a particular form of capitalist development based on the unbridled development of individual greed, exploitation and destruction of human beings*

(especially women and children) at the altars of profit, which it is no longer necessary to repeat as the experience of the socialist world clearly shows us, mass literacy may not have kept up with "development" temporarily. Yet a closer analysis demonstrates even that was an illusion fostered by a failure to grasp the totality of the reality of that period.

Thompson points out that even in this brutal phase of the history of capitalist development, the workers held on tenaciously to the fruits of literacy that they were being denied, even by proxy whenever possible. "Given the elementary techniques of literacy, labourers, artisans, shopkeepers, clerks and school-masters, proceeded to instruct themselves, severally or in groups....A shoemaker, who had been taught his letters in the Old Testament, would labour through the *Age of Reason*; a schoolmaster whose education had taken him little further than worthy religious homilies, would attempt Voltaire, Gibbon, Ricardo, here and there, local radical leaders, weavers, booksellers, tailors, would amass shelves of Radical periodicals and learn how to use Parliamentary Blue Books; *illiterate labourers would nevertheless, go each week to a pub where Cobbett's editorial letter was read aloud and discussed.*" And this too, in a period "when the formal education of a great part of the people entailed little more than instruction in the Three Rs." ![6]

It is precisely through this close connection between the struggle for literacy under developing capitalism and the betterment of the conditions of the masses that the struggle for the freedom of the press comes in, and Thompson points out: "There is perhaps no country in the world in which the contest of the rights of the press was so sharp, so emphatically victorious, and so peculiarly identified with the cause of the artisans and labourers. If Peterloo established (by a paradox of feeling) the right of public demonstration, the rights of a "free press" were won in a campaign extending over fifteen or more years which has no comparison for its pig-headed, bloody minded, and indomitable audacity. Carlile (a tinsmith who had nevertheless received a year or two of grammar-school education at Ashburton in Devon) rightly saw that the repression of 1819 made the Rights of the Press the fulcrum of the Radical Movement. But unlike Cobbet and Wooder, who modified their tone to meet the Six Acts in the hope of living to fight another day (and who lost circulation accordingly), Carlile hoisted the black ensign of unqualified defiance and, like a pirate cock-boat, sailed straight into the middle of the combined fleets of the State and Church. As, in the aftermath of Peterloo, he came up for trial (for publishing the Works of Paine), the entire Radical Press saluted his courage, but gave him up for lost. When he finally emerged, after years of imprisonment, the combined fleets were scattered beyond the horizon in disarray. He had exhausted the ammunition of the Government, and turned its *exofficio* informations and special juries into laughing-stocks. He had plainly sunk the private prosecuting societies, the Constitutional Association....and the Vice Society, which were supported by the patronage and the subscriptions of the nobility, bishops and Wilberforce."[7] Thus it is clear that even in the most brutal record of the development of

capitalism that we have, the connection between literacy, progress and civil liberties is integral from the dialectical standpoint of the working class while opinion opposed to it clearly reflects the positivist causal approach position of classes hostile to its struggle for emancipation. And today, as in the early nineteenth century, the most unashamedly imperialist Governments and Agencies supported by them are once more attacking the attainment of the objective of mass literacy.

How is this achieved ? First and foremost, by ignoring all definitions of education other than the British "liberal and individualistic, one that (education) is an end in itself, not for instance a means to development or to the reduction of poverty." Once this is done, it is correctly stated that "this liberal and individualistic tradition, whatever form it takes," is innocent "of political and economic realities."[8] Our contention is that this "innocence" results in arbitrarily creating water-tight compartments like "literacy" and "literacy plus" which in turn creates further problems like whether the 'plus' should be "vocational" or "conscientization or mobilisation."[9] While the editor rejects this narrow definition of education, he then proceeds to throw out the baby with the bathwater by happily declaring 'that none of the authors was "unduly perturbed by the question–what is adult education ?' or where lie its proper boundaries–questions that have frequently paralysed those in the British liberal tradition."[10]

There is, in fact, the revolutionary, working-class tradition which has very clear ideas of education, which is ignored by the editor and contributors altogether and it is not out of place to spell out its ideas on education here. V.I. Lenin, the founder of one of the world's most efficient education systems, the Soviet one, addressed the first All Russia Congress on Education in 1918 as follows. "We publicly declare that education divorced from life and politics is lies and hypocrisy." How easily both the narrow British view and the pragmatic U.S. version stand dissolved from this perspective ! Nor is it surprising that education programmes of the exploiting classes fail to enthuse the masses or to achieve their avowed aims. They are, in fact, never meant to succeed beyond a point. And the case studies in the book are proof of it."[11]

The Brazilian account states : "Our opinion is that the process of adult education cannot sensibly precede or follow other economic and social transformations. It is necessary to act concomitantly on the various levels on sub-systems of the social structure, and not to leave co-ordination of efforts to mere chance, to maximize the impact of the resources available for reducing poverty. *When literacy training takes place separately from other transformations at local and regional levels we run the risk not only of having what is learnt left unused, but also of repression and resistance to future educational actions.* The only possible benefits are individual ones. These should not be down-graded or undervalued, *but they are limited in scope*, when the basic objective is the improvement of quality of life."[12]

The Indian experience states : "One cannot help concluding that for a

vast majority of the population, which is in the grips of *absolute poverty*, the amelioration of that poverty, by direct relief and development of opportunities for income augmentation, is a prerequisite for adult education to be relevant. However, this is not a general conclusion, but a comment only on the *direct effect* of a Governmental Adult Education Programme where the Government concerned has a vested interest in the status quo."[13] Secondly, it refers only to absolute poverty, since the author notes the relevance of adult education alters with a rise beyond absolute poverty to acquiring new skills and expanding their extremely limited sphere of activity. This shows one how narrow and meaningless such a perspective becomes in the context of dealing with the question of adult literacy in general or even of tackling the question meaningfully as a whole.

The Kenyan experience is even clearer about this, when it notes : "Adult education, even at its first stage of literacy, by opening the door to the wide world of the printed message, can become an invaluable instrument for consciousness-raising and enhancing popular participation in the development process, when the contents and methods are chosen appropriately. If a large proportion of the adults are illiterate, an effective and sustained popular participation in local development is unimaginable without a literacy component and other adult education activities."[14]

The Chilean case-study is very clear about the limitations of such schemes under authoritarianism, when it notes : "The programme was a mixture of failure and success : a failure in terms of the social, political experience to function in an authoritarian society like that of Chile at the time; a success in terms of the survival of the work based on local organisation and resources."[15]

These narrow parameters of 'success' are again noted in the South Korean experience : "Saemul education, like the overall Saemul movement, has components *not directly designed to benefit the rural poor*, but designed to give them the opportunity to benefit." However, this too does not appear to mean much, as "the most poor experienced less benefit from Saemul education and the Saemul movement. Clearly the movement and its education have not yet fully succeeded where needs are greatest."[16]

Lenin pointed out clearly why this is so : "One of the fundamental faults of education in the capitalist world was its alienation from the basic task of organising labour, since the capitalist had to train and educate obedient and disciplined workers. There was no connection in capitalist society between the actual tasks of the organisation of social labour and teaching. There was dead, scholastic, routine teaching befouled by the influence of the clergy which everywhere, even in the most democratic republics, functioned in such a way that everything fresh and healthy was compelled to withdraw. Direct, vital work was made difficult because no extensive education was possible without a state apparatus and without material and financial aid."[17]

In the process of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the major

obstacle to working class organisation, the oourgeois state machinery, was dismantled; and we are told : "The revolutionary struggle has been the finishing school for Russian workers and peasants. They have seen that our system alone ensure their genuine rule, they have been able to convince themselves that the state is doing everything to assist the workers and the poor peasants in completely crushing th resistance of the Kulaks, the land-owners and the capitalists."

"The working people are thirsting for knowledge because they need it to win. Nine out of ten of the working people have realised that knowledge is a weapon in their struggle for emancipation, that their failures are due to lack of education, and that now it is upto them really to give everyone access to education."[18]

It is not surprising then, that a similar mass education urge is reflected in the process of the Nicaraguan liberation with the downfall of the US puppet, Somosa, and that it culminates in a successful literacy campaign, described in this collection. In fact, the Nicaraguans reduced illiteracy from 50 per cent in 1979 (and 85 per cent in some rural areas) to a mere 13 per cent in little over a year. By no stretch of imagination could any of the other case studies in this volume even come close to this kind of result. And that too, when 40,000 to 50,000 people had been slaughtered by Somosa's thugs and 40,000 children had been orphaned.

The programme was national and anti-imperialist in outlook; organised by the Government and coordinated by an organised anti-imprialist mass in struggle, without imperialist aid which had kept the mass of Nicaraguans illiterates for so many years.

There were six divisions : (1) Pedagogy, which was further sub-divided into Curriculum, Research, Training and Library/Museum sections. (2) Production and Design, (3) Organisation was a support and control structure for the literacy volunteers, and provided liaison with the different sponsoring organisations. It had five sections : Statistics and Census; the Popular Literacy Army; the Urban Literacy Guerillas; the citizens and labour organisations; (5) Financial Promotion and (6) Administration, which included logistical support (supplies, health, food distribution, transportation, communication and maintenance and plant maintenance) and that of Control, Accounting, Personnel and Budget.[20] Obviously, such a vast programme cannot be treated in the same framework as either the petty schemes or grand failures outlined above without seriously tampering with the comparative method.

Nor is their outlook comparable with the others in the case studies, for they declare : "We are teaching the poor and the disfranchised to read and write not out of charity, but rather so that they will be prepared both politically and technically to become the genuine authors of development and the only legitimate owners of the Revolution."[21]

The conclusions too are self-evident : "When adult education programmes addressed the structural roots of poverty—the system of inequitable power relationships—they inevitably create tensions and provoke reactions

from the dominant elites. If these strong interests hold the ultimate power, programmes will be limited and distorted. Under these circumstances improved living conditions for small isolated sectors of the population may be possible in the short run, but because the underlying causes of poverty remain untouched, such gains will probably not be longlasting and certainly not spread to other needy sectors. Only when a nation-a government and a people-is willing to battle the root causes of poverty, the disparities of power and wealth, can adult education programmes really be effective in ameliorating these conditions. When such efforts form an integral part of social transformation aimed to benefit and empower the poor, they can contribute significantly to reducing disparities. Before that moment, however, *they can still play an important part by providing basic education to some of those who will eventually take a lead in the changes necessary to forge a more equitable society.*"[22] Now it becomes obvious why the plutocrats of West Germany, Britain and USA are nervous about UNESCO's planned crusade to end illiteracy by the year 2000 and are clamouring for a 'practicable' solution. And this volume offers them a straw to clutch at.

One experience stands out among the rest of the "failed" national efforts of Third World states pursuing the path of crisis-ridden capitalist development : that of Sri Lanka, to whom our editor offers the "last word." although nowhere in Wijetunga's articles is any factual information given as regards the success of the Sarvodaya Shramdana programme there. So one wonders why they have been singled our for fulsome praise and compared so often to Nicaragua (albeit without any evidence to back up the claim), unless it is to dilute the force of Miller's conclusion

What are the special qualities of this programme that has caused the editor to single it out ? It claims to be "apolitical" voluntary agency, but we are informed that the leader of the movement "is both courted and feared by the government."[23] And the turning point is said to have come in 1966 when a hostile government attacked the organisation in the form of a cutback in finances, "and the movement was suddenly faced with either drastically curtailing and reshaping its activities or seeking substantial support from external sources."[24] And this the author considers a "propitious" moment in its developments. Who were these sources who freed our apolitical crusaders from their national government ? Basically Dutch and West German ones, as well as the World Assembly of Youth (WAY), which set the ball rolling in 1970. This organisation has an interesting history: "Through the NSA (National Students Association of USA) the World Assembly of Youth was controlled and operated by the CIA. There was an Indian affiliate of the WAY called WAY-India, now renamed Indian Assembly of Youth, after the exposure of the CIA links with the WAY."[25]

Moreover, the particular programme of financing elements in Sri Lanka was not unconnected with political activity. Around the same time, Sri Lanka's Finance Minister N.M. Perera disclosed "that the US Embassy in Colombo was making huge withdrawals from its food accumulations in the

banks. He alleged that the money was being used to subsidize the rightwing United National Party and other secessionist groups on the island."[26] And, of course, Wijetunga notes that "The seventies was a period of unprecedented expansion of the Movement, but also a period of considerable tension and distrust between SSM and the Government, particularly between 1975 and 1977. Since 1977 (with the coming to power of the UNP) relations between SSM and the government have been more harmonious, with close collaboration in various developmental activities."[27]

Moreover, Ariyaratne (who is a Magsaysay award-winner of 1969), "claims that Sarvodaya Shramadana is a synthetic ideology, with possibilities of universal application. In the Sri Lankan context, it has to draw its inspiration from the dominant Buddhist culture and philosophy to be easily understood by the people."[28] Are we then to understand that this successful form of conscientization is responsible for the spate of pogroms against Tamils that have taken place in 1977, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1983 and over 3000 killed since then ? If this is the price we pay for the US-inspired model of educational progress, we can do well without it. It should, moreover, be a warning to those who think that seemingly "apolitical" action-oriented groups receiving funds from abroad have no political ramifications in terms of imperialist intervention at all levels or that they can digest such funds successfully without upsetting the status quo too much.

Thus we are unable to agree with the conclusion dished out by the editor that for the success of such programmes to eradicate illiteracy and poverty, "evidently there is no simple correlation along a socialist-capitalist or authoritarian-liberal political specturm." In fact, Miller's conclusion cited above is far more plausible than his, even on the basis of his case studies. Moreover, nor can we subscribe to his view that "here Sarvodaya appeared to sustain a commitment to radical social transformation and to avoid becoming embroiled in and destroyed by formal politics, despite the deeply political import of what it was doing."[30] For, according to the facts presented in the paper itself, and conclusions drawn from them, the organisation functioned as a pawn of imperialist agencies, notably the CIA, and was part and parcel of the political process that brought the UNP to power, a process which now threatens to destroy Sri Lankan society rather than develop it. The fact that the editor of this volume could only find the Sri Lankan example to counteract the Nicaraguan one is evidence indeed of how poorly imperialism is doing in its search for "alternatives" to socialist tranformation. And that is heartening as we can be sure that such bankrupt forces cannot be more than nuisance to UNESCO and its far reaching programmes. It should be the concern of every intellectual, academic and student to make sure that illiteracy is eradicated by the year 2000 and that no compromise is made to bypass rather than eradicate the social and political obstacles in the way of its implementation.

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17 Lenin V.I. Speech at the Third All Russia Conference of Directors of Adult Education (1920) in *op. cit.*, p. 79.

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20 Miller, Valerie in *op. cit.*, p 109.

21 Miller, Valerie in *op. cit.*, p. 113.

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23 Wijetunga, MJK : Sri Lanka's Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in *op. cit.*, ed. Duke p. 186.

24 Wijetunga MJK : *op. cit.*, p. 192.

25 Parakal, Pauly : *The Inside Out of CIA* (1974) p. 81.

26 Parakal, Pauly : *op. cit.*, p. 71.

27 Wijetunga, MJK : *op. cit.*, p. 195.

28 Wijetunga, MJK : *op. cit.*, p. 196.

29 Duke, Chris; How can Large Scale Adult Education Combat Poverty ? in *op. cit.*, p. 230

30 Duke, Chris : *op. cit.*, p. 232.

EDITORIAL NOTE

TRUTH, if unpleasant, is often mistaken for hyperbole. It appears fanciful to say that U.S. imperialism is once again making serious plans to "roll back" communism by war; nevertheless, it is true. And it is not only in Nicaragua, or Angola or Kampuchea that it is hoping to reverse the process of history; its "strategic thinking" even encompasses plans to break up the Soviet Union through a nuclear war. The Reagan administration has come to the dangerous conclusion that victory is possible in a nuclear war, victory in the double sense of the term, namely a decimation of the Soviet "military and political power structure", and a limitation of the damage to the United States to a level where its own survival and recovery are not jeopardised. It is this supposition which underlies the frantic quest for strategic superiority exemplified *inter alia* by the Star Wars programme. With the achievement of this superiority, it is thought, the Soviet Union would not only be rendered incapable of effective intervention against U.S. plans to refashion the world to its own liking, but would itself cease to escape the fate of becoming an object of such refashioning.

This lunacy, which considers even the possible loss of 20 million American lives an "acceptable level of damage", cannot just be scoffed at. It represents an unprecedented threat to humanity which has to be seriously understood and fought. The focus of the current number of *Social Scientist* is on this question of nuclear threat.

The lead article by C. Raja Mohan analyses the changing nuclear strategic perspective of the United States. The main thrust of his argument is that technological progress, resulting from the massive research and development effort in this field, has so significantly increased the range and sophistication of nuclear weapons that the old concept of nuclear deterrence based on a mutual hostage relationship has given way to considerations of the feasibility of a nuclear war. Deterrence presumes a stable equilibrium; as this gets undermined by technological progress, the notion that nuclear weapons are meant only to deter is supplanted by the belief that they can even be used. It is only disarmament, as is being proposed by the Soviet Union, rather than deterrence which can save the world from a nuclear holocaust.

Nuclear disarmament, however, as the note by Vivek Monteiro argues, would require a sustained political struggle by the peace forces all over the world against the regimes in the NATO countries, and the U.S. in particular. This requires the building up of a broad world-wide coalition of pro-disarmament forces, for which, according to the author, the conditions today are propitious. In any such international struggle for peace and against the nuclear threat, India can and must obviously play a crucial role. But the legitimacy required for such a role would be lost to her if she persists with the current national policy of "nuclear ambiguity" instead of clearly taking the initiative of coming to an agreement with our neighbours on the exclusion of nuclear weapons from the sub-continent.

The piece by Deb Kumar Bose touches on the same theme. With the acquisition of nuclear weapons by Pakistan on the horizon, pressure is building up in India for developing her own atomic arsenal. Bose attacks the position of the bomb-lobby, warns the progressive forces not to line up behind this lobby and urges support for the democratic struggle of the people of Pakistan against the imperialist-backed military dictatorship. India's nuclear policy is an important and sensitive subject on which extensive discussion and debate are needed in the country. We hope that the pieces by Monteiro and Bose which take forthright positions on the subject, would stimulate such a debate.

Dasgupta's paper on the anti-colonial peasant struggles in late eighteenth century Bengal explores the nature of the class alliance underlying the struggle and the contradictions which informed it. It makes the important point that the objective situation, instead of sharpening the autonomous consciousness of the oppressed peasantry, discouraged, on the contrary, a snapping of their traditional dependence on other classes. The paper by Jagannath Pathy studies the nature of U.S. intervention in shaping the strategy of agricultural development in a number of Third World countries including India.

Finally we carry an obituary piece by Jayati Ghosh on Simone de Beauvoir, the outstanding French intellectual of the Left and author of the pioneering work *The Second Sex*, who passed away recently.

C. RAJA MOHAN*

The Tragedy of Nuclear Deterrence

IN THE post-war world, the concepts of nuclear deterrence and arms control have come to represent the sum and substance of strategic studies. The two concepts, evolved out of the highly influential intellectual activity of the Anglo-Saxon strategic thinkers across the Atlantic in late 1940s to the early 1960s. These concepts were integral to the American thinking on the nature of nuclear weapons and their political and military utility. Within a few years after their enunciation, deterrence and arms control became the dominant mode of Western strategic thought. It was a dogma, few dared challenge.

The RAND-minds of Santa Monica and the high priests of Cambridge, Mass,, on the banks of Charles River, proclaimed the emergence of the 'golden age' of strategic studies. The mood of self-congratulation and the euphoria over discovering the 'laws of motion' of the nuclear age, were indeed overpowering. A British scholar wrote in 1970: "The (strategic) theorists did their job almost too well. They provided an intellectual apparatus which seems to be standing upto the test of time and is perfectly adequate for analysing present strategic policies and most of the technological and political problems likely to occur in future."

In the early 1970s, the 'golden age' of strategic studies appeared an endless one. The champions of deterrence had by then spawned, at least in the US, of a network of think-tanks and university departments exerting great influence on the American defence and foreign policies. The American war-peace establishment gave rise to a host of civilian strategists and military experts who could move effortlessly from academic chairs to the corridors of power in the White House, Pentagon and the State Deparment. This 'deterrence-arms control' sect not only influenced the American domestic agenda, but was powerful enough to set the criteria for the 'haute coutre' of strategic and arms control fashion globally. There was little resistance to the onslaught of this veritable intellectual imperialism.

But the anti-climax to the golden age of deterrence was not too late in coming. By the early 1980s, the strategic edifice of deterrence was in shambles. The underlying assumptions of the theory of deterrence came to be challenged both from within and without the American strategic establishment. The collapse of the SALT process in 1979, the antipathy of the Reagan

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Administration towards arms control, the challenge of Reaganites to the reigning orthodoxy of mutual assured destruction, their embrace of the idea of victory in a nuclear war, the new use of strategic defences or star war techniques, represented the crisis in Soviet-American relations, as well as an upheaval in western strategic thought.

The challenge to the doctrine of deterrence also emerged from an unexpected quarter—the rising peace movements in the West. The disillusionment with the traditional ideas of deterrence and arms control, which had quite obviusly failed to curb the nuclear arms race, and intensified fears of a nuclear holocaust, brought forth critical questioning of nuclear deterrence, by the people hitherto uninitiated in nuclear strategy. These included a variety of groups, including the Church.

The argument of this paper is to suggest that the theory of deterrence had contained its own seeds of destruction, and given its inherent and unshakeable faith in nuclear weapons as instruments of policy, it was bound, to lead the world closer and closer to the nuclear precipice. It is also suggested that as a solution for the avoidance of global and cataclysmic war, the theory of nuclear deterrence is not only inefficient, but dangerous.

The Concept of Deterrence

Although it is in the nuclear age that deterrence has been elevated to an exalted position, the concept itslf is an old one and goes back to the very beginnings of human conflict. In its most rudimentary form, deterrence is a specific type of relationship in which an actor-a state, group or an individual—seeks to influence the behaviour of another in desired directions. While a party can influence another in many different ways, deterrence is distinctive Resting primarily upon threats of sanction or deprivation, deterrence is an attempt to indicate to an opponent that the costs of an action by him far outweigh benefits. Under deterrence, an actor A seeks to prevent another B from undertaking a course of action which A considers undesirable, by threatening to inflict unacceptable costs upon B in the event if the action is taken.

The strategy of deterrence has at least three requirements—capability, credibility and communication.

The state undertaking the deterrence strategy requires demonstrable physical capacity for imposing unbearable costs relative to any likely gain his opponent could hope to achieve. Such capability would not, of course, be sufficient if the challenger is unable to assess carefully the cost-benefit tradeoffs. Therefore, deterrence assumess 'rationality' in the thought and behaviour of both sides involved. If either or both fail to make cold and sober calculations of potential risk and gain of any action, deterrence is likely to break down. However, there are no universal standards to judge rationality, and the calculations of costs and benefits could be highly subjective. In the pre-nuclear era, rational assessments of relative military capabilities was at best problematical, leaving considerable room for miscalculations and mistakes. Since such assessments were highly subjective and could only be pro-

ved or disproved in an actual war, deterrence was tenous and more often than not broke down. It is only with the advent of nuclear weapons that the costs of aggression have skyrocketed.

The mere existence of capability is not sufficient to ensure deterrence. For it to work, it must make any potential challenger believe that the costs of taking a prohibited action *could* exceed the gains to be made, but also that they *would* do so. Credibility is a complicated task and could vary from one situation to another. Credibility would depend significantly on the challenger's assessment of the deterrer's past political record, the strength of its political leadership, and how it could behave in a crisis. That is, if a challenger believes rightly or wrongly, the leadership of the state undertaking deterrence is incapable of imposing unacceptable costs or it is weak and vacillating, detterence is unlikely to work.

A key condition for a successful deterrent strategy is that the potential opponent be made fully aware of precisely what range of actions is proscribed, and what would be the consequences if he oversteps the prohibited units. Clear communication is thus a necessity, but difficult to fully achieve in the politics of nation-states. Though a variety of communication channels exist between two adversaries, conveying an appropriate message or signal need not be easy. Decision making in modern government is a highly complex and bureaucratic process, during which often contradictory 'signals' are likely to be conveyed to the adversary. The dangers of miscalculation are considerable in such situations. The reception, analysis and assessment of signals is itself a complicated organisational process. A signal by the time it reaches the adversarial leadership, could be completely distorted and easily be misunderstood by it.

These conditions of deterrence are rarely satisfied in full measure in the real world of politics among nations. In the past, given the limited lethality, intensity and scope of warfare, the costs of failure of deterrence were not too high. But in the nuclear age, and in the era of global war, the consequences of failure of detterence would be cataclysmic.

Before we examine the nature of nuclear deterrence, we must briefly review the two types of deterrence that existed in the pre-nuclear era. One is the passive deterrence, which seeks to dissuade an adversary from initiating war. Passive deterrence is an attempt to convince the opponent that he cannot be successful and denying him the objectives and goals he seeks. The second type, active deterrence, consists of readiness and capability to inflict unacceptable punishment and pain, in the event of deterrence failing.

Historically, the use of the strategy of deterrence was predominantly at the level of denial. It is only with the advent of sea power and, later, air power, that the technological capacity to inflict heavy punishment, without first defeating the adversary's military forces came into being. Seapower enabled the disruption of vital seaborne trade routes, access to materials and markets and, thus impose heavy penalties over an aggressor. Air power, particularly the ideas of strategic bombing made deterrence credible, as it facilitated the bombing of civilian populations and adversary's warfighting capabilities. It

was with airpower with its capacity to project force quickly and globally, coupled with the enormous destructive power of the nuclear weapons, that detterence came to the centre stage of strategic thinking

Evolution of Nuclear Deterrence

Nuclear deterrence as a concept has been much abused over the years. It has become a catch-all term, under which a host of contradictory ideas take shelter. The concept has undergone continual and profound changes in the past four decades, moving from the idea of preventing a war to the doctrine of fighting a nuclear war and winning it. To understand the idea of nuclear deterrence, it is essential to examine its historical evolution.

Massive Retaliation

Bernard Brodie, the foremost of the American strategic thinkers of the modern era, proclaimed as early as in 1946; "Thus far, the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on, its chief purpose must be to avert them. It can have almost no other useful purpose." However, it was long before such an idea of the supreme need to avoid the danger of nuclear war took root. Before we examine the nature of nuclear deterrence in the first phase of the nuclear era, it is necessary to look at the technological and strategic aspects undergirding it.

Although the US had a nuclear monopoly until 1949, when it was broken by the USSR, it had very few nuclear weapons in its arsenal. This was in the main due to the shortage in the availability of fissionable materials. Until exploration led to the discovery of uranimum and the setting up of uranium enrichment plants, the American stockpile of nuclear weapons was in two digits. By the early 1950s, rapid buildup of nuclear weapons began to take place. A second major development of the era was the discovery of hydrogen bombs whose explosive power ranged in the millions of tons of TNT. Alongwith the development of these multi-megaton behemoths, small low yield tactical nuclear weapons for battlefield use were also being built.

But the most important strategic fact of this period was the 'overwhelming nuclear superiority of the United States over the Soviet Union. This superiority was not due to the size of its arsenal or a better delivery system, both of which were in the favour of US. It was mainly due to the geographic fact that the US was a sanctuary against nuclear attack. Despite being in possession of nuclear weapons, there was no way the USSR could deliver them on the American homeland.

Before the intercontinental bomber arrived, the US deployed its nuclear bombers in strategic bases across the Eurasian landmass—from UK to Japan. this advantage forward deployment, was something which the U.S. has enjoyed since then, and been reluctant to give up. The Soviet Union could not acquire similar geographic advantage of deploying bombers close to the US territory. Even when it built intercontinental bombers beginning 1955, the capacity to threaten US homeland was less than real. The bombers were

propeller-driven, incapable of penetrating US defences evenif one-day suicide missions were undertaken.

Thus, throughout the 1950s, despite both sides having nuclear weapons, nuclear deterrence was credible only for the US. The Soviet Union's capacity to inflict punishment on the US was less then marginal. The common perception then that the Red Army could march across Western Europe in a few days was far-fetched. The near-complete destruction of Soviet economy during the war, the loss of more than twenty million dead in the war, meant that the USSR was in no position to undertake an adventurous course in Europe.

The Soviet Union did nothing to dispel the exaggerated fears in the West of Soviet military might. While striving to secure off-setting power, Moscow found it necessary to hide her weakness in extreme secrecy. The drastic nature of post-war mobilisation was not revealed. The first longer-range bombers, acquired in the 1950s would make fly-passes over Red Square, double back and fly past again to give the appearance of great numbers. The Soviet policy of strategic deception and fantastic claims of its strength perhaps encouraged Western over-reaction, and hence made their own task more difficult. But for Soviets, this policy certainly did help keep the West "off balance."

It was in this context of overwhelming American nuclear preponderance that the doctrine of "massive retaliation" was declared by John Foster Dulles in April 1954. The massive retaliation doctrine held that in response to any Soviet "aggression" in Europe or elsewhere would be swiftly answered by a devastating nuclear attack to reduce the USSR to a "smoking radiating ruin" in a matter of a few hours. The US move need not necessarily be in retaliation, but could also be a full-scale pre-emptive strike.

Politically, the idea that atomic weapons were "absolute" had taken firm hold. Economically, in that era of fiscal conservatism, nuclear weapons were considered as providing more security at a less cost—'a bigger bang for the buck'. Nuclear weapons could substitute for the great expenditure on conventional armed forces and their equipment, thus making good economic sense. Militarily, the deployment of nuclear weapons was just an extension of the existing doctrine of strategic bombing. Strategic bombing had been used in the second world war to deliver massive amounts of conventional bombs over the adversary's civil and industrial targets. Now strategic bombing would be more effective with atomic and hydrogen bombs. Their use was to break enemy morale, their purpose was psychological, aimed at civilian and political leadership.

The doctrine of masive retaliation meant that US would deter attacks not only on itself but also on its allies in Europe and elsewhere with its nuclear might. The military strategy was to be willing and able to respond vigorously at places and means of its own choosing, and by reinforcing local forces with the deterrent of massive firepower of nuclear weapons.

Towards Mutual Deterrence

The US strategic superiority could not, however, last for very long. As the Soviet Union showed by the Sputnik in 1957, it was capable of breaking out of this inferiority. By acquiring intercontinental ballistic missiles, it became possible for the Soviet Union to threaten the American homeland. The ICBM was clearly the trump that was to release the Soviet Union from the straitjacket of strategic inferiority. It was the single major factor that was responsible for overthrowing 'massive retaliation' doctrine. But, well before the advent of Soviet ICBM capability, the dissatisfaction with massive retaliation was becoming evident.

A number of American civilian strategists began to seriously question the credibility of the massive retaliation doctrine. Well before America's vulnerability to a Soviet counter-attack became apparent, the strategy was severely criticised as an inappropriate and, therefore, an incredible response to a wide variety of contingencies. An American reprisal on Soviet cities appeared an unbelieveable threat in response to local and limited conflict—say in areas relatively peripheral to American interest. The gross disparity betwen ends and means inevitably paralyzed the political will of those required to implement the deterrent threat, and the entire deterrent posture began to look like a gigantic bluff. William Kauffman, one of the leading civilian strategists compared massive retaliation to going on a sparrow-hunt with a cannon. He argued that the strategy was no deterrent to small-scale attacks and encouraged the adoption of 'salami tactics' by the Soviet Union—even in Western Europe which was central to European concerns.

The issue of credibility of U.S. strategy was also taken up from a different perspective by the French. Can the U.S. be expected to defend, say Paris or Rome, and risk losing New York? Pierre Gallois, the French strategist, argued that the vulnerability of the American homeland had rendered the NATO alliance obsolete since the U.S. could no longer be relied upon It is impossible for any nuclear state to extend its deterrence to its allies, at the risk of its own destruction. Nuclear deterrence, in the age of vulnerability can work for itself but not for its allies—even very close ones.

A third criticism of massive retaliation was that nuclear weapons cannot substitute for conventional forces. Since massive retaliation cannot prevent local, limited and conventional attacks, it is necessary to be prepared to fight conventional wars.

Fourth, if a massive spasmodic nuclear war envisaged by the doctrine of deterrence is not credible, it became necessary to think about limited nuclear war options. In the late 1950s, U.S. strategists came to believe that if a war threatening the entire human civilization was possible, then a certain amount of attention should be directed towards the problem of controlling and limiting nuclear wars in such a way that their occurance would not inevitably be disastrous. It was further argued that the acquisition of limited war capability might actually plug the gaps in the strategy of deterrence, by enabling the U.S. to pose a more credible threat than massive retaliation to less than massive aggressions.

Fifth, massive retaliation assumed that a Soviet attack on the U.S. could be merely deterred by the possession of large stockpiles of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Critics argued that the capability requirements of deterrence were much more stringent and far from being automatic. A deterring force like the bombers could also be a tempting target. If a deterrent force is vulnerable to a surprise attack by the very force it is supposed to deter, it can no longer deter and invites pre-emption. Thus, in the strategy of deterrence, it was the residual capability of that force, that part of it which could survive a surprise nuclear attack and strike back at the attacker, which is really crucial. But differently, if a deterrent was to deter, rather than merely provoke or invite a first strike, it had to have the capacity to ride out such an attack and inflict unacceptable retaliatory damage.

These were the challenges to the massive retaliation doctrine that Robert McNamara grappled with in devising a new strategy of deterrence for the United States. He and the civilian strategists he brought along into the Kennedy Administration were to have a profound and lasting impact on the evolution of nuclear strategy and the arms race. They discarded the massive retaliation doctrine and replaced it with a variety of measures. The 'McNamara Strategy', as it was called, embraced both deterrence and limited war concepts, and was a formidable attempt to reshape U.S. defence policy.

The new strategy emphasized the building up of conventional forces, which was neglected under the Eisenhower administration. To redress the problem of extended American deterrence over Europe, he undertook the strategy of flexible response, which envisaged considerable buildup of non-nuclear limited war capability. The strategy called for tailoring the Western response to the nature and extent of Soviet aggression. While discouraging the development of independent European nuclear forces, the new emphasis was on proportionality, on meeting the Soviet Union on the same level as its initial attack occured, with the implicit threat that escalation would bring in the American strategic forces into play. The new strategy for NATO was not without difficulties. It downgraded the punitive element in deterrence in favour of denial violence. Since it inevitably emphasized limited war-fighting rather than war prevention, it aroused fears among Europeans that such a war would inevitably be fought on their territory. The European preference was for an unspecified general deterrence exercised through threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The McNamara strategy wanted choices—other than surrender or suicide implicit in the age of mutual vulnerability to nuclear weapons. As President Kennedy put it :

> "We have been driving ourselves into a corner where the only choice is all or nothing at all. World devastation or submission—a choice that necessarily causes us to hesitate on the brink and leaves the initiative in the hands of the enemy."

In an attempt to avoid the cataclysm implicit in the 'spasm' war, McNamara developed the distinction between counterforce (targetting

adversary's military forces) and counter-value (or counter-city) targets and sought to maximize the options available to the U.S. in conducting a limited, although nuclear, war. City avoidance strategies and counterforce targeting became important priorities for forces which were designed to limit civilian damage in the hope that Soviets would reciprocate in kind.

The search by McNamara to find ways and means of avoiding the stark alternatives between annihilation and surrender opened up the inevitable problem of thinking about the unthinkable. The ideas of limited nuclear war, damage limitation, and counterforce were nothing but a camouflage for the preparation of strategic thought process towards nuclear warfighting.

But McNamara himself realized some of the dangers of the counterforce doctrine he was propounding. He realized that his counterforce posture played into the hands of U.S. Air Force, which was bent on keeping its near monopoly of nuclear weapons. The USAF was producing an endless list of military targets inside Soviet Union and basing its demands for nuclear weapons on such a list multiplied further to compensate for various factors of uncertainty such as interception, operational failures, inaccuracies, need for assigning multiple number of warheads for each target. Thus, a counterforce strategy was leading to a strategy requiring unbelievable number of nuclear weapons. He also, perhaps, realized that the technical requirements for a counterforce doctrine—high accuracies, the complete separation of civilian and military targets did not exist.

McNamara soon reversed himself from the counterforce doctrine and espoused the strategy of mutual assured destruction, notorious since then as MAD. The whizkids and backroom boys of McNamara quantified the amount of damage that needs to be threatened on the adversary to perpetuate deterrence. This "assured destruction' capability in McNamara formulation, was the capacity to destroy one-fifth to one-quarter of the Soviet population and one-half of its industrial capacity even after absorbing a first strike against U.S. strategic forces. It was calculated that once U.S. forces had delivered the equivalent of about 400 one-megaton bombs on the cities and industrial plants of the USSR, the percentage of additional industry and population destroyed by additional weapons would fall off sharply. Somewhat arbitrarily, they took as an axiom that the U.S. must maintain the ability to inflict the damage of 400 MT on the USSR. And if both sides had this assured destruction capability—the capacity to inflict unacceptable damage on the other—even if the other strikes first, there would be no incentive to undertake a nuclear attack, deterrence would prevail, it was hoped, forever.

Thus, the concept of MAD was born. The MAD doctrine had a number of requirements. It needed a large number of strategic forces to ensure strategic sufficiency—the ability to absorb a first strike and retaliate. It required that forces be invulnerable to a pre-emptive surprise attack by the other side. To ensure this, the Kennedy administration encouraged taking nuclear weapons to the seas, since submarine-borne nuclear forces were considered invulnerable. The Administration also put the land-based ICBMs in

hardened silos to increase their survivability. The emerging MAD strategy of McNamara had also grappled with the emerging technologies of 'defence' against nuclear weapons—then called ABM systems (now star wars). The widespread ABM debate in the U.S. was clinched by McNamara, who argued that damage limiting measures like ABMs were not viable, regardless of the amounts of money spent on them. The Soviets could always overcome these by a determined nuclear buildup. He also believed that a stable balance of terror required the USA to remain invulnerable to Soviet weapons. It was not as if U.S. had an obligation to do so, but it was sound strategically, because the USSR was likely to maintain *its* assured destruction capacity.

The essence, hence, of the MAD strategy was for both sides to be vulnerable to each others second strike capability, with population of either side being the hostages. This ensured that there would be no incentive for a first strike, and natural nuclear deterrence would ensure that there is no nuclear war. The MAD strategy soon gathered a bipartisan consensus within the U.S. and became the reigning orthodoxy in the U.S. The 1972 SALT I agreement between the U.S. and USSR indeed codified this strategy as the key to peace in the nuclear age. The essence of SALT was two-fold. It resolved the debate between offence and defence in the nuclear age in favour of offence. The delicate balance of terror must be preserved. Second, it limited the number of strategic nuclear weapon launches on both sides.

The expectation in the early 1970s, was that mutual nuclear deterrence would last for the foreseeable future, and there was no other answer for maintaining peace in the nuclear age. However, the onslaught of technological and doctrinal change, slowly but certainly, began to chip away at the unshakeable rock of deterrence. To these two factors we must now turn to, in order to understand the collapse of deterrence.

Technological Changes and Deterrence

The theory of deterrence held that it can manage technological change and preserve nuclear deterrence, through the process of arms control. The prime function of arms control was to maintain the mutually beneficial state of stable deterrence, and manage the impact of military technology on the stability of military balance between the two adversaries, so that a nuclear war does not become more likely. Arms control and deterrence theorists emphasized the need to recognise the common interest of the possibility of reciprocation and cooperation between the adversaries to reduce the likelihood of war, its scope and violence if it occurs and the economic costs of being prepared for it. But the philosophy of deterrence and the practice of arms control have utterly failed to cope with the dynamics of nuclear arms race.

Numbers : Why Large is Beautiful

The theory of deterrence had always great contempt for disarmament. They were always suspicious of drastic arms reduction proposals. They scoffed at the balanced reduction of forces which the U.S. advocated at the

disarmament conferences of the 1950s. They argued that such utopian proposals undercut the essence of mutual deterrence in the nuclear age. Strategic instability would arise if one side or both lost the ability to impose assured destruction on the other, after absorbing a first strike. Drastic cuts in nuclear arsenals would reduce the number of delivery systems below that needed for a second strike capability and hence the working of the balance of terror. The central question of deterrence and nuclear arms control was not reduction but maintenance of strategic stability, which alone can avoid nuclear war, and not those sentimental plans for disarmament and drastic cuts.

This naturally meant that the addition of any new nuclear weapon system could be permissible, if it meets the requirements of deterrence—strategic stability, crisis stability and aviodance of nuclear war. It was this philosophy that led to the most awesome buildup of nuclear arsenal under the Kennedy Administration. It ordered the building of 1,000 land-based missiles, nearly 700 odd submarine missiles, nearly 7,000 theatre nuclear weapons were deployed in Europe. Thousands more went into bases around the world and ships at sea. The proclaimed 'assured destruction' capability was only a baseline; the deployed deterrant was probably 10 to 20 times larger than the 400-MT level.

The mutual deterrence doctrine was basically a product of an age of declining American superiority. But the high-sounding rhetoric of MAD about balance of terror, mutality of interest of the adversaries in deterrence and arms control notwithstanding, the U.S. strategic community was never fully prepared to face the consequences of strategic parity between the U.S. and the USSR. The theory of deterrence was fine so long as the U.S. retained visible supremacy in nuclear arms. Once the Soviet Union responded to the Kennedy buildup and attained strategic parity in the 1970s—a parity pegged at an absurdly high level, the paradigm of deterrence began to unravel.

Are There Good Nukes and Bad Nukes ?

Just as the doctrine of deterrence permitted expansion of nuclear arsenals, it also encouraged technolgoical modernization of nuclear arsenals by bringing in new weapons. Provided, of course, they were stabilizing. Similar to the way in which the Americans see the world as being divided between "good guys" and "bad guys", the deterrent theory distinguishes between good nuclear weapons and bad ones as it does between good military technologies and bad ones.

The standard categorisation was that nuclear weapons which gave a disarming first strike capability are bad and those that are only capable of a second strike are good. The good weapons are those that are relatively invulnerable to attack and not themselves accurate enough to be used in a first strike mode. Their invulnerability means they can survive an attack and be used in retaliation. Their lack of accuracy implies they are not threatening to the adversary's retaliatory forces. Such weapons are considered stabilizing and good.

The bad ones are those that make it possible to launch a discriminating first strike against the adversary quickly and accurately and are also vulnerable themselves to attack. They thus have to be used first to destroy the adversary's retaliatory capability or face the likelihood that they will be destroyed before they can be used. The "use them or lose them" syndrome makes these weapons highly destabilizing. This neat characterization of weapon systems by the deterrence theory is less than real. Let us look at some specific examples.

The deterrence school has always condidered the submarine launched ballistic missiles as good. They are invulnerable, since their position at any point of time is unknown. They are mobile and can stay underwater in the seas of the world. They have also been inaccurate, hence cannot threaten a disabling strike against the adversary. However, these features of SLBMs are neither permanent nor universal. First, the accuracy of SLBMs has steadily increased making it conceivable for use in a first strike mode. For example, unlike the Polaris and Poseidon and Trident C-4 SLBMs, the new American Trident D-5 SLBM is very accurate and is capable of taking out Soviet misslies in hard silos or their command and control facilities. Second, the invulnerability of submarines could be steadily eroding, under the impact of the rapidly evolving anti-submarine warfare (ASW) technolgoies. The oceans of the world which have so far provided a comprehensive cover to the submarines might soon become transparent as a package of satellite tracking, reconnaissance aircraft, underwater sound systems, and attack submarines that could put the missile submarines at risk. Third, the invulnerability of submarines has been more true of American sea-based forces, rather than of Soviet SLBM force. The U.S. superiority in ASW technology and the weaknesses of the Soviet seapower have always meant that 'benignness" of sea-based forces has only been true to United States. Unlike the United States which has open seas on either side, the Soviet naval access to oceans is through narrow choke points, which are under the thorough surveillance of American ASW systems. The Soviets also lack a global system of naval facilities and bases forcing Soviet submarines to stay at home most of the time. It is for these reasons that the Soviets have been unwilling to shift their missile forces from land to sea. The U.S. strategic theorists have rarely been willing to see that their distinction between good and bad weapons could be highly subjective. Fourth, the SLBM forces never met another criterion for "good" weapons—the need for strong central political control over nuclear weapons. It is now fairly well known that SLBM forces do not have the Permissive Action Links (PAL) that exist for land based nuclear weapons, and that the submarine commanders have had considerable "launch autonomy" in releasing nuclear weapons.

Cruise missile also illustrate the futility of distinguishing between good nukes and bad nukes. The deterrence theorists recommend cruise missiles because they are slow, like aircraft, and would not threaten a first strike. Being small and mobile, they could ride out an attack and retaliate. But advances in Cruise missile technology such as 'autonomous terminal homing' would

make them more accurate, and its speed could go up from its present subsonic speeds of 550 mph to supersonic speeds, allowing it to be used in a first strike. The Cruise missile case shows that today's good weapons could be tomorrow's bad ones, as they undergo technological modernisation.

A priori, there appears to be no way to distinguish between good and bad military technologies. For long, the arms controllers have praised the stabilizing role of military satellite technology. Satellites give early warning of an attack and hence reduce the prospects for a disarming first strike; they help in better communications between adversaries and also enable tighter central political control over nuclear weapon systems; by continuously monitoring adversary's territory they facilitate the verification of arms control treaties, so essential for retaining confidence between the two nuclear weapon powers.

The very same military satellite technology, blessed as a stabilizing factor in deterrence, has today evolved into something totally contradictory. Were it not for satellites, doctrines of limited nuclear war counterforce attacks would not be as popular as they are today. Military reconnaissance satellites have helped in precisely mapping missile silos and other military targets, the destruction of which is central to nuclear warfighting doctrines. Navigational satellites, like a NAVSTAR of the U.S., when fully operational at the end of the decade will contribute towards enhancing the accuracy of SLBMs to the same level as those of land-based ICBMs. Geodetic satellites have helped develop accurate gravitational mapping of the earth necessary for the most accurate working of inertial guidance systems for ballistic missiles. Communication satellites, considered virtuous in their ability to retain control over nuclear weapons, also help in planning and executing highly coordinated and sophisticated nuclear strikes on the adversary in a so-called controlled nuclear war. Nuclear explosion detection satellites praised as benign because they verify test ban agreements, are also useful to make damage assessment during a nuclear war, so as to retarget and redirect one's nuclear forces for their 'optimal' use. Here, then, is the classic case of a 'good' military technology transformed into a 'bad' one over a short period of time.

The reality is that there are no 'good' or 'bad' military technologies. All of them are positively ugly, since they can never make it cozy or comfortable to live with nuclear weapons. The U.S. arms control and strategic thinking in its formative phase was dominated by the system analysts, game theorists and scientists. For all their analytical brilliance and technical virtuosity, they sadly overstimated the capacity of deterrence theory to manage the impact of technological change on the nuclear balance.

The technological change in nuclear weaponry, propelled by vast military research and development establishments, has worked unrelentingly to undermine the objectives of stable deterrence and avoidance of nuclear war. The distinctions drawn between stabilizing and destabilizing weapons, of first strike and second strike was illusory. The incremental advances in the accuracy of nuclear delivery systems, the miniaturization of warheads, the blurring distinction between conventional and nuclear

weapons, the re-emergence of technologies have made the belief that a nuclear war could be fought and won as a credible and powerful one, undercutting the essence of the theories of deterrence, that nuclear weapons are meant to deter and not to be used.

The idea of stability, so dear to the practitioners of deterrence has proved to be elusive. The problem is not external to the doctrine of deterrence but is at its very philosophical foundation, which encourages the development of so-called stabilizing weapons and technologies. The problem with the deterrence approach is that it cannot prevent the ceaseless advances in military technology from undermining the very objectives of deterrence. The best example of the failure of deterrence and arms control approach is the consequences of MIRV technology.

The SALT process, instead of reducing nuclear arsenals, had fixed the balance at a terrifying high level. This was justified on the need for strategic sufficiency. The SALT treaties limited launchers but not warheads. The MIRV technology allowed the deployment of more than one warhead per launcher. The deterrence approach rechanneled the nuclear arms race in the direction of building more warheads on each missile. In purely technical terms, it was just an economical way of packaging warheads. But strategically, it proved disastrous. While the number of launchers remained under the ceiling, the number of warheads multiplied rapidly. This inevitably brought about the 'window of vulnerability' since the number of targets (launchers) remained the same, and the number of weapons increased, it became theoretically possible to use a small portion of one's arsenal to destroy a large part of the adversary's arsenal—at least that part which was on fixed land-based ICBMs. The 'window of vulnerability' for the land-based forces was made much out of by the U.S. right-wing since the late 1970s, but it was clearly a problem for both sides. Perhaps it was far more dangerous for USSR, which had concentrated nearly all of its strategic forces on land. However, it was in the U.S. that the SALT process came under attack, thanks to the hysteria over the "window of vulnerability."

Thus, the land-based ICBMs which had become more accurate and capable of a disarming first strike, were also now vulnerable, thanks to the MIRVing of missiles permitted by SALT. Once the need arose to resolve the vulnerability of land-based ICBMs, many a fancy solution were considered. But one answer which inevitably come to the fore was the reconsideration of defence. The research into defensive technologies, permitted by the ABM Treaty, had progressed sufficiently to make influential sections of the U.S. Government in early 1980s to believe the defensive technologies or Star Wars was a worthy goal to pursue. We are thus at a stage where technological opportunity has reopened the entire issue of offence-defence relationship in the nuclear age. It is very well for the American liberal arms controllers to attack the Reagan Administration on the Star Wars programme. But it is the inherent weakness of the deterrence approach embodied in the ABM—SALT accord that has caused the inevitable destruction of the grand bargain that was made.

Doctrinal Change and Deterrence

The common argument in the studies on arms race is that 'technological creep' is responsible for the escalation of the arms race. This argument is not completely true. It is a fact that technological change has been one of the most intractable problems in grappling with the nuclear arms race. But the reality is that technology, rather than being the driving force behind the arms race, has spent the last two decades catching up with nuclear doctrine. The demands of the doctrine of deterrence, which technologies strove to fulfill, are the real culprits of the current nuclear crisis.

The Lure of Counterforce

We have noted how President Kennedy wanted choices between surrender and annihilation. The lurch towards counterforce and limited nuclear war doctrines did not stop as McNamara outlined the doctrine of mutual assured destruction. But MAD doctrine and the debate about it were real only at the declaratory level. But at the operational targeting level, McNamara continued with the counterforce doctrine. Since he had built up the thousands of weapons, far in excess of the requirement of assured destruction, it was obvious that the actual target planners had to do something with them. What thev did was continue to follow McNamara's 1961 target planning guidance and aim the weapons at military as well as civilian targets. Whatever the stated preferences for MAD over nuclear war-fighting, counterforce remained the de-facto target policy. But the real limitation on counterforce was technology, which did not permit limiting damage, executing precise strikes over military targets, etc. For the U.S. Presidents, the lure of counterforce, of the need for choices between all or nothing, continued to prove attractive. And technology slowly but certainly began to give confidence about executing counterforce.

It was perhaps inevitable that after the 8 years of nuclear buildup by Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, President Nixon should have asked the same question as Kennedy. Nixon wondered : "Should a President, in the event of a nuclear attack, be left with the single option of ordering the mass destruction of enemy civilians, in the face of certainty that it would be followed by the mass slaughter of Americans ?" This led him to announce, through James Schlesinger the Defense Secretary in 1974, that the U.S. was welding on to its established 'assured destruction doctrine', a new targetting philosophy, which was very similar to the old 'counterforce strategy' of McNamara. The Schlesinger doctrine called for a greater range of options in the U.S. targetting policy. These included "clean surgical strikes" against Soviet missile sites, now made feasible by increased accuracy, speed and reliability of nuclear delivery systems. The development of smaller sized warheads, in contrast to the earlier megaton behemoths, the new attraction for 'tailored' or specific mission-oriented weapons like the neutron bomb gave the confidence that limited nuclear war options are feasible, a nuclear exchange can be controlled by avoiding population centres. Though lip service was paid to 'assured destruction', the emphasis of Schlesinger was on cir-

cumstances in which limited nuclear use might occur, than of an all-out massive attack on the urban centres of the adversary. This was clearly a shift from the focus on the mutual hostage relationship of deterrence to acquiring the ability to actually execute a nuclear war. The number of options had now increased in their range and sophistication to a point at which nuclear war becomes thinkable.

This thrust was continued under the Carter Administration. In July 1980, President Carter issued the Presidential Directive 59 providing for vet larger number of limited nuclear options in the new philosophy known as 'countervailing strategy'. The doctrine enlarged the concept of controlled nuclear war into a 'protracted nuclear war'. The nuclear war no longer would be a spasmodic cataclysm, but one which can be controlled over a long period of time though execution of limited nuclear strikes. The doctrine emphasized :

1. *Flexibility*, providing for a continuation of options ranging from the use of small numbers to a large portion of U.S. nuclear forces;
2. *escalation control*, making possible "negotiated termination of the fighting";
3. *Survivability and endurance* of both nuclear forces and command, con trol, communications and intelligence (C'I) facilities;
4. targeting objectives
   a. strategic nuclear forces
   b. other military forces
   c. leadership and control targets
   d. industrial and economic base;
5. reverse forces for maintenance of nuclear dominance both during and after a protracted conflict.

With the PD 59, a nuclear warfighting strategy had emerged from under the mantle of nuclear deterrence. Here was a doctrine which claimed it was 'enhancing' deterrence, but actually seeking to wage a nuclear war It sought the survivability of its own nuclear forces, and yet wanted the ability to destroy the Soviet retaliatory capability. It wanted a survivable C'I network to enable US to wage a controlled nuclear war, and yet made the Soviet C'I facilities and political targets a high priority target. The claim of Carter Administration that countervailing strategy was not a "radical departure from the U.S. strategic policy" is unexceptionable. It was only "a refinement, a codification" of actual developments "in the light of current conditions and current capabilities." New nuclear capabilities have been translated into warfighting strategies. It was the realization of the counterforce and limited war ideas of McNamara.

War-fighting to War-winning

The developments of the 1970s U.S. doctrine to a stage where, it was believed that deterrence will work only if U.S. had the demonstrable capability to wage a nuclear war, in the event of deterrence breaking down.

But this capability was indistinguishable from one which made a discerning first strike feasible. It was thus no longer deterrence by mutual vulnerability and secure second strike forces, as conceived under MAD, but deterrence through threat of war-fighting and first strike.

The Reagan Administration is usually accused of radically recasting the U.S. nuclear policy. While its style has contributed towards this view, there is no real substance in it. All that Reagan did was to take U.S. nuclear strategy a few more logical steps forward from the PD59. He transformed the policy from 'deterrence through war-fighting' to a strategy based on 'deterrence through war-winning'. The Reagan nuclear doctrine is based on the principle 'victory is possible'. The doctrine is based on several propositions. First, a nuclear war can occur. Second, it can be won in some meaningful sense. And third, for the U.S. to prevail, it must have strategic superiority. Deterrence is one object of war-winning, but in contrast with assured destruction and war-fighting, deterrence is to be achieved by the threat to use nuclear weapons to "defeat" the Soviet Union, while activating measures to protect the United States, in the event of deterrence failure.

The requirements of a war-winning strategy have been articulated by Colin Gray, whose views have come closest to those of the Reagan Administration on nuclear strategy. Gray has argued that the U.S. needs a strategy in the sense of specific political objectives to be achieved in war. Gray recommends that the U.S. "seek to impose such a military stalemate and defeat as is needed to persuade disappointed Warsaw Pact allies and ethnic minorities inside the Soviet Union that they can assert their own values in very active political ways." Here are the outlines of ethnic targeting—decimate the Russian nationality, and you will have the other Soviet ethnic groups and Warsaw Pact allies waiting to welcome the U.S. armed forces as liberators.

The breakup of the Soviet Union as a nation state would only take America half way to victory. The other half involves damage limitation to insure the survival of enough of the U.S. to enable it to continue as a nation-state. Gray observes that "a combination of counterforce offensive targeting, civil defence, and ballistic missile and air defence should hold U.S. casualties down to a level compatable with national survival and recovery." He suggests that an offense-defense strategy "should reduce U.S. casualties to approximately 20 million, which should render U.S. strategic threats more credible."

The reality of these mind-numbing strategy of Gray was soon confirmed by statements by Alexander Haig and President Reagan that a nuclear war is winnable. This was further reinforced by a leak in *New York Times* of May 30, 1982 of the top secret *Defence Guidance* document of the Reagan Administration which set a requirement for American forces to have the capability to "prevail" in a nuclear war and "render ineffective the total Soviet (and Soviet-allied) military and political power structure." Though the public furore over this leak in Europe and America led to softening of the public posture of the U.S. leaders, the policy appears to be intact.

Thus, from the temple of deterrence, there emerged finally the satanic idea of fighting and winning a nuclear war. It was a logical evolution of the ideas of deterrence from the 1950s. President Reagan's initiation of the Star Wars in 1983 was not surprising, given the inexorable thrust of the war-winning doctrine. The Star Wars is presented to the U.S. public as a total astrodome defence of American population. The U.S. liberals attack this as pure technological fantasy. But the direction of the U.S Star Wars programme is not to defend U.S. people, but to protect its nuclear forces. Star Wars makes little sense against a hypothetical full-scale Soviet nuclear attack. It could make sense as a shield against a depleted Soviet attack, after an American first strike. The essence of Star Wars is thus to deny the Soviets an ability to retaliate, thus completing U.S. strategic superiority.

The most ironic defence of the counterforce and Star Wars doctrines of the USA has been in moral terms. The resurgent right wing strategic thinking gave the final knockout blow to the declining breed of those championing MAD, in a powerful religious argument. Is not MAD immoral, holding populations as hostages to maintain deterrence? Is not a doctrine which emphasizes attacks on military targets and defence of people a better way of deterrence? Thus, the new jargon for war-winning strategy is 'mutual assured survival' as opposed to mutual assured destruction.

The tragedy of deterrence lies in the fact that forty years after the invention of nuclear weapons, we are now closer to a nuclear war than before. The hope that deterrence can prevent a nuclear war is in shambles. Instead, it has finally enshrined Vince Lombardi's dictum : "winning is not everything, it's the only thing." Thus, deterrence appears to be the problem rather than the solution. The only alternative to nuclear deterrence is nuclear abolition. The proposals by Gorbachev calling for elimination of all nuclear weapons has fallen on deaf ears in the West. Forty years of addiction to nuclear deterrence is difficult to shake off.

*ATIS DASGUPTA**

Early Trends of Anti-colonial Peasant Resistance in Bengal

THE FORMAT of this paper is exploratory in nature. We would submit a tentative suggestion for explicating certain trends of anti-colonial peasant resistance in Bengal during the second half of the 18th century. The paper shall be divided into three sections : (i) the main character of early colonial impact under the English East India Company, (ii) a selective description of peasant insurgency from some well-known anti-colonial movements and (iii) complexities involved in formulation of general trends of early peasant resistance. Though the paper may inherently suffer from a number of shortcomings, we shall try to carve out a delimited theme for discussion rather than go out for more vulnerable generalisations on a massive and flamboyant scale.

(I)

Any formulation on the perspective of anti-colonial character of peasant resistance during the British rule should begin with a resume of the basic economic changes which started taking shape in Bengal and elsewhere after the introduction of colonial rule of the East India Company from 1757 onwards. There were different phases of colonial impact and the basic economic changes asumed various dimensions accordingly. Our discussion, as already mentioned, would be limited to the intial 'mercantilist' phase of the late 18th century when an increased revenue from new colonial acquisition was essentially considered as a larger mercantile capital. The first reaction of the Court of Directors to the news of assumption of *diwani* in 1765 was to ask the Company in Bengal "to enlarge every channel for conveying to us as early as possible the annual produce of our acquisitions" and "to increase the investment of your Company to the utmost extent you can".

It is now generally recognised that the main thrust of the East India Company, particularly after the assumption of *diwani* in 1765, was to enhance the land revenue of Bengal which was essential for financing one-way export trading and administrative expenses of the Company. Between 1765 and 1784, the collection of land revenue was increased from Rs. 6.5 million to Rs. 26 million.[1] Till 1757, the English traders were obliged to bring bullion to India, as Indian cotton and silk goods had a flourishing market in

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the West while the Indian demand for Western products was usually negligible. The import of bullion ceased after 1757. The problem was solved for the East India Company after the victory at Plassey. Now the surplus from land revenue and the plunder from Bengal were enough for the Company's 'investment' in India—a blatant process of drain, as the profits from new acquisitions in Bengal were being used to buy goods at arbitrary low rates for export from the province. The 'investment', which had already amounted to 6 million current rupees in 1767, rose to Rs. 10 million in 1777[2]. The drain of bullion along with one-way export of materials by the Company tended to affect severely the traditional world of trade and manufacture of silk, cotton and other items of commerce in Bengal.

Enhancement of land revenue was carried out by the colonial rulers through various administrative experiments which initially, encouraged replacement of the old zamindars by a new group of intermediaries who were allowed to indulge in public auction of land. As early as in 1775, the Court of Directors of the Company in their Minute of 15th September remarked: "we have reason to believe that not less than one-third of the Company's lands are or have lately been held by the Banians of English gentlemen. The Governor's Banian stands foremost by the enormous amount of his farms and contracts." Between 1765 and 1777 "lands were let in general too high, and to find out the real value of the lands, the most probable method was to let them to highest bidders and also to dispose of the farms by public auction".[3] With the help of these intermediaries who could be willingly ruthless, unhampered by 'roots that clutch', collection of land revenue increased four times between 1765 and 1784 and the burden of this phenomenal enhancement was ultimately placed on the ryots or the small peasants. Thus a crucial contradiction took shape and antagonism bacame acute between the ryots and the other discontented classes, on the one hand, and the colonial rulers and their new intermediaries, on the other. This was the nature of major contradiction in Bengal during the early colonial phase and we shall try to place the insurgent peasants and assess the anti-colonial character of their resistance in the context of unfolding of this contradiction. There might have been some differences among the discontented classes themselves as well as certain clash of interests between the colonial rulers and their new intermediaries. But these were minor contradictions which did not alter the essential positions of different classes in relation to basic economic forces unleashed by the colonial rule.

(II)

Peasant resistance became particularly active after the devastating famine of 1769-70 which brought into sharp focus the contours of major contradiction and the inherent crisis came to a flash point. There was a partial failure of crops in December 1768 due to shortfall in rains. In the early months of 1769, prices soared high. The September crop, which used to be less important than the December harvest, was also scanty. There was not a drop of rain for six months, nor any supply of the inferior grain—*chaitali* harvest—

normally reaped in March-April. A total failure, therefore, of a third crop took place after the deficiency of the two preceding ones. Pestilence raged in almost every part of the province. "All through the stifling summer of 1770, the people went on dying. The husbandmen devoured their seed-grain,...they ate the leaves of trees and the grass of the field; and in June 1770, the Resident at the Durbar affirmed that the living were feeding on the dead."[1] Warren Hastings, who toured the districts, admitted the loss as "at least one third of the inhabitants" of the province.[5]

The relief measures of the Company were inhumanly inadequate. "Utmost that the Council, when pressed by the Court of Directors as to Government relief efforts, could show was a distribution of £ 9000 among thirty millions of people, of whom six in every sixteen were officially admitted to have perished."[6] The whole colonial administration was accused of dealing in grain for its private advantage. The officials and the agents of the Company were charged with allegation of carrying off the peasant's scanty stock at arbitrary prices, stopping and emptying boats that were importing rice from other provinces, and compelling the poor ryots to sell even the seeds requisite for the next harvest.[7]

Though the Company faced "an aggregate of individual suffering which no European nation has been called upon to contemplate in historic times", the collection of revenue was violently kept up almost to its former standard.[8] In a year when almost 35 per cent of the whole population and 50 per cent of the cultivators perished, not even 5 per cent of the land revenue was remitted, and 10 per cent was added to it for the ensuing year.[9] The situation was made more unbearable by the imposition of additional burden of *najai* (access involving payments by villagers to compensate for the defaulters) on those ryots who had barely survived the famine.

The consequences with wider implications began to be felt when cultivation commenced in 1771. It was then discovered that the remnants of the population would not suffice to till the land. The Council admitted that there had been "such a mortality and desertion among the ryots as to deprive the revenue farmers of the possibility of receiving the rents in arrear."[10] Notwithstanding the abundant crops of 1771, the province continued to fall out of tillage. Gradually, a division of the strata appeared among the peasants : first, the so-called resident (khud-kasht) cultivators who, from attachment to their traditional moorings or, more specifically, by compulsions of indebtedness, continued on the same estate as before the famine; and, second, a more adventurous stratum, termed non-resident or migrant (pahi-kasht) cultivators, who now had no stakes preventing them from throwing up their previous holdings and going in search of new ones at the lower rates to which depopulation had reduced the market value of land. Within six years after the famine, this new form of the old stratification of resident and non-resident cultivators had distinctly taken place.[11] The non-resident ryots who had previously formed a subordinated group now came up to constitute, for the next thirty years, a prominent feature in agrarian structure of Bengal.

This desertion and new stratification among the peasantry signficantly contributed to the consolidation of emerging insurgency. The increase of *pahi-kasht* ryots was a product of dislocation caused by the famine which had also profoundly disturbed the habitual tolerance of state power by the peasantry. Desertion itself signified a note of defiance and, therefore, it also signalled a corresponding change in the level of consciousness of the concerned *pahi-kasht*. Desertion or flight of the peasants, otherwise an unlawful act, was considered to be an initial gesture of resistance against excessive imposition of revenue demands, even during the late Mughal period.[11] Such a mood of despair and defiance of the ryots was observed by the contemporary officials of the Company in the post-famine years, though the 'prose of counter-insurgency' which they affected might have chosen different expressions. They were compelled to take notice of "the frequent firings of villages by the people, whose distress drives them to such acts of despair and villany. Number of ryots, who have hitherto borne the first of characters among their neighbours, pursue this last resource to procure themselves a subsistence."[13]

More significant was the convergence of the initial peasant violence with concerted insurgent activities on a broader scale. We shall take examples from two types of rebellions : first, the Fakir and Sannyasi (or the Fakir-Sannyasi) uprisings where the *pahi-kasht* ryots took active part immediately after the famine and, second, the Rangpur uprising of 1783 where the *khud-kasht* cultivators appeared to have participated significantly. We are leaving out the case studies of Chuar and other rebellions of that genre for want of space. The involvement of the peasantry in the Fakir-Sannyasi and the Rangpur uprisings would be initially treated separately in brief; and this would be followed up by an appraisal of broader similarities in *modus operandi* of the insurgents in two types of upsurge.

The swift convergence of the initial peasant resistance with the on-going insurgency of the Madari Fakirs and the Dasnami Sannyasis did not fail to draw immediate attention of the contemporary officials of the Comapny. In fact, the new migratory behaviour of the peasants was viewed as identical and almost synonymous with the roving movements of the Sannyasis and the Fakirs. The ryots were reported to have "formed themselves into bands of so-called houseless devotees and roved about the country." The Council wrote in 1773 : "a set of lawless banditti, known under the name of Sannyasis or Fakirs, have long infested these countries; and, under pretence of religious pilgrimage, have been accustomed to traverse the chief part of Bengal, begging and plundering wherever they go, and as it best suits their convenience to practice."[14] In the crowd of starving peasants who had neither seed nor implements to recommense cultivation with, and the cold weather of 1772 brought them down upon the harvest fields of lower Bengal, burning, plundering, ravaging in bodies of fifty thousand men "[15] The early phase of sporadic resistance by the Fakir and the Sannyasis, who had been severely affected since 1757 by the Company's measures as regards resumption of rent free tenure, money-lending and trade and commerce, underwent

qualitative changes by the massive entry of the peasantry after the ravages of the famine.

While the uprising at Rangpur started in January 1783, its first rumblings could be heard a few months earlier. In November 1782, Richard Goodlad wrote to the authorities in Calcutta referring to the formidable combinations of the ryots in withholding payments for increased land revenue and illegal impositions like 'deerin-willah' and 'batta'. The immediate enemy against whom these combinations were formed was Debi Singh, the Farmer-in-Charge appointed by the Company for Rangpur. Goodlad suggested that the whole weight of the government should be brought on the side of the farmer and the collector be empowered to enforce the payment of all balances due to the farmer with "unrelenting vigour."[16] The collector, however, miscalculated It is true that, faced with unprecedented coercive measures adopted by Debi Singh and his agents, there was a large-scale desertion of the ryots, at the initial stage. But not all of them deserted, and some also came back after a while. Finally the *pahi-kasht* cultivators combined with the *khud-kasht* ryots and "the whole body of the people were in arms."[17] David Patterson, who was specially deputed by the Committee of Revenue in February 1783, suggested that the number of rebels could go upto 100,00[18], and he made a remarkable submission that it would have been a wonder if the people had not risen.[19]

A major target of the rebels, both during the Fakir-Sannyasi and the Rangpur uprisings, was directed at intercepting and recapturing the enhanced revenue which was collected in cash and was kept either in the *kutchery* of the new intermediaries or at the disposal of the Company. Shortly after the famine, the Supervisor at Natore reported the following operation of the Fakirs under the leadership of Majnu Shah during January 1772. "This morning...the Fakirs moved to Kolegong, in Silberis (Bogra)...and they have taken Rs. 1690/- from the Kutchery of Jaysin which had been deserted by the officers on the approach of this banditti. It appears that they have with them two camels, about 40 rockets, 400 matchlock men, a few swivels and altogether 1000 men who carry arms. Mudgenoon (Majnu) himself is mounted on a very good horse and several of his attendants also have horses." But it should be noted from the same letter that, so far as the ordinary villagers were concerned, "Mudgonoon (Majnu) has given injunctions to his own followers to avoid all kinds of oppression or severity and to take nothing but the voluntary contribution from the people by way of charity."[20] Writing to the Court of Directors in October 1774, the Governor-General admitted that "a considerable part of the deficiency (in the collection of revenue) may be attributed to the plunder, extortion and depredations occasioned by the continued incursions of the Sannyasis."[21] Information on interception of the collected revenue can be available in abundance from the contemporary official records, though often loaded with 'prose of counter-insurgency'.

During the initial stage of the Rangpur uprising, a body of the peasant insurgents reached Dakhalyganj in pargana Kakina, at Salmari, and released such people as were confined there for non-payment of revenue. They seized

the amlahs of the kutchery and brought them to Balaganj in Kazirhat where the main group of the insurgents was assembled.[22] In the meantime, the ryots had attacked the kutchery of Kishoreganj in the pargana of Kazirhat which had become one of their major targets because Sheik Mahomed Mollah, who set up his headquarters there, had earned considerable notoriety in the matter of revenue collection. Another farmer of disrepute was Gourmohan Choudhuri who was considered as the principal agent of Debi Singh. The ryots soon launched an attack on the Dimla kutchery, got hold of Gourmohan and clubbed him on the head. The insurgents entered the *tosha-khana* (store room), opened the chests, and plundered all the cash, papers and records they could find. Thereupon the rebels carried Gourmohan to Dirjinarain, their leader, to the south of Dimla where they finally killed Gourmohan mercilessly.[23]

The rebels then proceeded to Bhawoniganj and broke open the *golahs* in which the Company used to stock rice.[24] This kind of drive to recapture hoarded food materials by the unfed ryots had also been described vividly in a near-contemporary Bengali verse entitled *Majnu Shaher Hakiket.*[25]

Certain passages of the *Hakikat* (translated version) would run as :

"The Company's agents and *paiks*
tortured artisans and ryots
for exorbitant revenue
and people deserted villages.

* * *

Thousands of Fakirs responded,
and they stood behind Majnu, their leader.
Also the Sannyasis assembled and fraternised.
Jointly the rebels attacked the *kutchery*
and ravaged the Company's *kuthi*
to recapture revenue, and provisions,
The English were afraid and crestfallen.
But they hoped
that their suffering would
come to an end."

As a logical sequel to their total rejection of the Company's authority to collect enhanced revenue through new intermediaries, the rebels—both in the Fakir-Sannyasi and the Rangpur uprisings—tried to improvise an alternative structure of revenue collection of their own. In case of the Fakirs and the Sannyasis, their approach to parallel revenue collection was not entirely new and they appeared to have extended their traditional system of collecting donations from the zamindars and the ryots a little further in order to challenge the Company's right and authority in this regard. Thus, the *gomestas* to the new zamindars of Pargana Alapsingh reported to the Provincial Council at Dacca in 1780 that "last year Fakir Majnu Shah with a number of followers attacked and plundered several Mozahs under Purgunnah Alapsingh, levied money from them to a considerable amount and consequently

prejudiced the revenues of the Company."[26] In October 1784, the Collector of Murshidabad reported. "Shaw Mujenoo (Majnu) a few days since made his appearance with about two hundred and fifty armed men.....and a crowd of followers. He crossed from Bettereah (Bhatariah) about three *coss* from the Silberis Cutchery and began to collect immediately the assessment which he usually makes at every village. I am under some apprehension,lest he should plunder the House (the Collector's house at Silberis)."[27] In January 1986, the Collector of Rangpur apprehended "great trouble to keep the ryots quiet and they most undoubtedly will take the first opportunity of absconding or pleading it as an excuse for not paying up their heavy *Kist of Pous* to the Company."[28] In March 1986, the same Collector informed Major Dunn that "a large body of Sannyasis numbering 1500 were at Dewangunge where they were levying contributions on the zamindars and ryots and would take the western route to Ghoraghat and Dinajpur."[29]

Thrust towards parallel revenue collection became more prominent during the Rangpur uprising where the rebels attempted to form a rebel government, though for a very brief period. When the upsurge reached its peak during January-February 1783, the peasant insurgents appointed certain officers to run a regular government of their own, for example, nawab, dewan, bakshi, etc.[30] Below the high officers, there were quite a large number of local officials of a subordinate rank known as Sardars. Dirjinarain was elected the nawab. Baneswar, son of Basser Pramenik of the taluk of Salmari, was elected a dewan; Hari Das was also appointed as a dewan.[31] The rebel government issued proclamations forbidding all payments of revenue to the colonial government. Thus Hari Das, the Dewan, wrote to the ryots of Sarkar Pinjirah in the following terms: "We have made an insurrection... All Coochwanah (Rangpur) are come forth. You do the same and join us. You pay no more revenue."[32] The rebels also levied a tax throughout the countryside under the head of *ding khurtcha* ('insurrection charges') to defray the expenses of the uprising.[33]

Along with multiple targets of the rebels as regards enhanced land-revenue exactions of the Company, they also directed their attacks, perhaps not so consistently, against the Company's monopolistic privileges over the inland and export trading which was financed by the surplus generated from increased land revenue in Bengal. As we have noted earlier, the Company's 'investment' amounted to a blatant process of drain, as the profits from new acquisitions in Bengal were being used to buy goods at arbitrary low rates for export from the province. The two principal articles of trade were raw silk and cotton piece goods. The Directors, for example, insisted that no Indian trader be permitted to purchase silk of any kind or quality whatever at any *aurang* from which the Company's 'investment' was supplied.[34] Such overt use of political power by the Company to further its colonial control set in the decline of the indigenous merchants, including the Sannyasis, in raw silk trade. As regards the condition of the artisans—whether he was indentured *tanti* (weaver) or the *chassar* (silk-grower) or the *nakad* (silk winder), the concomitant of progress towards monopoly was the deterioration of their

income and living standards. In so far as these aggrieved interests were also connected with the deepening crisis in peasant economy, the rebels during the Fakir-Sannyasi and the Rangpur uprisings directed their offensive against the colonial network of unequal exchanges.

Contemporary official records indicate that the rebels intercepted and plundered the merchants who appeared to be carrying on the Company's trade. *Bhawani Pathak*, a close associate of Majnu Shah, took leadership in this kind of insurgent activities. His sphere of operations was spread over the parganas of Pratabbazu and Patiladaha in Bogra, Rangpur and Mymengsingh districts. In 1787, some merchants carrying on the Company's trade complained to Williams, Superintendent of Government Customs at Dacca, of "Bhowanny Pathuck (Bhawani Pathak), a desperate man having taken and plundered their boats in their passage." Williams "gave the merchants some sepoys and a *parwana* to take Pathuck in custody. Pathuck refused to obey the sepoys or the *parwana*....and he again plundered the boats of merchants and actually seized one and the property that was in it."[45] Closely connected with these attacks on the merchants, pillage of the English factories and *aurangs* was also carried on by the insurgents. As early as in 1763, the Dacca factory was temporarily captured by the Fakirs[46] and the Rampur Boalia factory in Rajshahi was plundered by the Sannyasis.[47] In March 1783, Grant, Agent at the Malda factory, reported to the Collector of Bhagalpur: "the country in the neighbourhood of Malda was being infested by several large bodies of Fakirs who have committed many depredations.... They are now near the Company's *aurang* at Nirschindpore"[48] In January 1792, a determined offensive was unleashed by the Fakirs on the Company's factory at Birtara in Mymensingh district.[49] Also in the district of Rangpur, the Collector, in an attempt to convey his observation on the violent temper of participants in the Rangpur uprising, noted in 1784 : "I had reason to apprehend that the public treasury, the town of Rangpur and the Company's factory would be attacked and plundered."[50]

We shall now deal with the problems of approximating the general trends of early peasant resistance and its anti-colonial character from a study of the Fakir-Sannyasi and the Rangpur uprisings. A major question of general nature that calls for an answer is related to the composition of the leadership of the insurgency. It emerges from the source materials that the Madaris and the Dasnamis led the Fakir and Sannyasi uprisings while the leadership in the Rangpur resistance was largely provided by the Bosneahs. Though differentiation was taking shape within the ranks of Dasnamis and the Madaris, it cannot be denied that a sizeable section among the Dasnamis and, to a lesser extent, among the Madaris did represent landed, trading and, even, moneylending interests of the pre-colonial genre. In case of the Bosneahs, they were regarded as the village headmen. Though the Bosneahs did not have that much of landed and trading interests like the Sannyasis and the Fakirs, they did not also spring from the rank of the poor ryots. Then why did the poor peasantry who actively participated in both the Fakir-Sannyasi and the Rangpur uprisings accept the leadership of the Dasnamis, the Madaris

and the Bosneahs? The answer may not be found in the rarefied autonomous domain of the peasants but elsewhere. There were, no doubt, certain clashes of interests between the ryots and the associated artisans, on the one hand, and the Fakirs, the Sannyasis and Bosneahs, on the other. But faced with the major contradiction unleashed by the colonial exploitation in the field of land revenue and trade, the minor pre-colonial contradictions drifted to a subdued condition. Furthermore, the Madaris, the Dasnamis, the Bosneahs and all other related social groups with landed and trading interests, which had been protected in the Mughal period, were now themselves exposed to colonial exploitation of one kind or other. Placed in the midst of a qualitatively changed situation, the peasants must have perceived the unprecedented encroachments from the East India Company and its intermediaries as more formidable and urgent. Their initial reaction was large-scale desertion. The widespread migration of ryots led the British Parliament to order an enquiry into the reasons that led the ryots "to abandon and relinquish their lands."[11] Verelst also admitted the flight of producers from mulberry cultivation to the raising of other crops.[12] Gradually the peasants tended to explore other methods of resistance and there they might have found the Sannyasis and the Fakirs, both armed and organised, and the Bosneahs with a traditional background of anchorage as dependable allies in face of common danger from alien forces. Such dependence on religious groups as well as on classes with landed and money-lending interests were often found among the insurgent peasantry elsewhere in late Mughal period and during early colonial phase.[13] Besides, the Sannyasis and the Fakirs, in course of their proliferation across the earlier centuries, had come close to the rural life of Bengal through their regular tours and pilgrimage, discourses (*pravachana* and *sama*) and other religious activities. More fundamentally, in a backward feudal economy of Bengal which was rendered further vulnerable by the mercantile colonial thrusts, the objective situation did not encourage the peasants and the artisans to snap their traditional moorings of dependence. Nor did it necessarily sharpen their autonomous consciousness and enable them to assume an altogether independent position in organising protracted resistance. Such resistance, therefore, had to take the shape of an united front where the leadership might not necessarily rest with the most oppressed ones.

Inspite of this trend of mixed leadership, the peasant character and the popular content of the uprisings were not eroded. As regards the Fakir and Sannyasi rebellion, we have already noted the massive entry of ryots on the heels of the ravages of the famine. A scrutiny of official correspondence reveals how the peasants extended active support to the Sannyasis and the Fakirs during their actual confrontation with the Company's forces. Thus, in 1772, Charles Purling wrote to the President: "Captain Thomas...pursued them (the Sannyasis) in a jungle where the sepoys expended all their ammunitions without doing the least execution; when they perceived the ammunition spent, the Sinassies (Sannyasis) rushed in upon them in very large bodies from every quarter and surrounded them...Captain Thomas

ordered the sepoys to charge upon them with their bayonets which they refused to do...Captain received one wound by a ball (missile) through the head which he tied, and next he was cut down. The ryots gave no assistance but joined the Sinassies (Sannyasis) with lathis and showed the Sinassies (Sannyasis) those whom they saw had concealed themselves in long grass and jungle and, if any of the sepoys attempted to go into their villages, they made a noise to bring the Sinassies (Sannyasis) and they plundered the sepoys' firelocks."[14] Warren Hastings was surprised to find an abiding understanding which "the religious bandits" were able to maintain with the local people. On March 31, 1773, Hastings made his oft-quoted submission that, inspite of the combined operations of four battalions of the Company's army, "the revenue could not be collected, the inhabitants made common cause with the marauders, and the whole rural administration was unhinged."[15]

The peasant character of insurgency came into sharp focus in the Rangpur uprising. There used to be huge assemblage of peasants in times of action. At Kotalia near Saradhoby ten or twelve thousand rebels assembled.[16] At Kakina, ten thousand peasants got together near Hat Suteebaree.[17] The poorer roryts showed a distinct initiative throughout the course of the uprising. When the paiks sent by the zamindars of Kazirhat asked the members of a peasant assemblage as to who was their leader, they answered : "We are our own leaders and we are going to obtain justice".[18] This is also corroborated by the evidence of a chief leader of the rising, Dirjinarain, who was otherwise a Bosneah. When he was asked, "In what light did the ryots consider you ?", Dirjinarain answered : "Like another ryot."[19] Involvement of the impoverished peasantry in the uprising was also eloquently captured in a contemporary song, *Rangpurer Jager Gan* written by Ratiram Das,[20]

The song (translated version) reads as follows :

> "Under the Company, the ruler was Devi Singh.
> Because of his misdeeds, the country faced famine.
> Revenue assessment was not fixed,
> but the extraction from the peasants steadily increased.
> His only aim was to demand more and more;
> under severe torture a wail of agony arose.
> ...the subjects were enraged at last;
> in thousands they rushed together.
> They took sticks, spears, sickles and choppers.
> For children, there was none to look after.
> The peasants carried their plough
> on their shoulders,
> they ran like savages as they were made beggars.
> To Rangpur peasants come from all quarters,
> they started throwing stones and brickbats,
> which kept falling with thud
> from all directions.
> In the fusillade of stones,

some suffered broken bones,
and the palace of Devi Singh
was reduced to a heap of bricks."

The next important question of general nature was the anti-colonial character of the uprisings. We have already noted from contemporary official evidence that the Company in its crucial activities—enhancement of land revenue of Bengal and utilisation of that surplus for arbitrary purchase of goods for one-way export from the province—had suffered initial setbacks due to the Fakir-Sannyasi and the Rangpur uprisings. Though the insurgents did not finally succeed to thwart these major thrusts of the Company, they emerged as one of the prime movers in opposing 'mercantile' colonialism in eastern India in its basic areas of operation during the second half of the 18th century. In this sense, the early uprisings can be looked upon as one of the first organised efforts to perceive, from the view point of the discontented classes, the nature of major contradiction unleashed by the East India Company and to take a definite side in the midst of opposites in motion. Though the insurgents could not turn the tide, they did not fail-even with their elementary level of consciousness and multiple feudal moorings—to identify their main enemy and, consequently, they hardly made any major compromise with the colonial rulers. This combination of awareness and protest had few parallels in the contemporary society of Bengal and elsewhere, where a pervasive climate of collaboration and loyalty had already started striking its deep roots.

The colonial rulers, on their part, did not also fail to assess their adversaries. During the Rangpur uprising, the Collector of the district asked the farmers to set fire to the houses of the recalcitrant ryots, to attach their crops and property, to seize their wives and children and to kill them in emergency. As a measure of severity, the Collector directed Lt. MacDonald that on apprehending the leaders of the rising, he should immediately hang up one or two of them as a public example. "It is with great concern", he wrote, "I issue you an order of this kind, but the matters are now at such an alarming height that nothing but an uncommon act of authority can surmount it and I plainly see, unless you execute with vigour the order I now give you, every officer in the country belonging to the farmer will be murdered."[51]

As regards the insurgents of the Fakir and Sannyasi uprisings, Warren Hastings issued a circular, on January 21, 1773, to the District Collectors "acquainting them that from this time they were to keep a particular eye over the motion of the people known by the name of Sannyasis (and Fakirs) whose incursions of late had been frequent and distressing to the country and they were to spare no pains to procure the most exact intelligence of them and require the assistance of the Zamindars, Dewans, etc., for obtaining it. They were further directed...to give public notice that all such persons and bodies of men travelling armed through the country will be regarded as enemies of the Government and pursued accordingly."[52]

This characterisation of the insurgents—as 'enemies of the

Government'—by one of the most prominent architects of the British colonial rule in eastern India may help us understand the basic anti-colonial nature of the uprisings that took shape in Bengal across the second half of the 18th century.

1 Ashoke Mitra : 'Fifteen Decades of Agrarian Changes in Bengal' in Barun De *et al* (ed), *Essays in honour of Professor S.C Sarkar,* New Delhi, 1976, pp. 394-395.

2 N K Sinha : *The Economic History of Bengal,* vol 1, Calcutta, 1961, p 18.

3 *Minute of Warren Hastings in Council,* 8th March, 1775.

4 W W Hunter : *The Annals of Rural Bengal* (reprint of 6th edition), Calcutta, 1965, pp 21-22.

5 Letter from the President and Council to the Court of Directors, dated 3rd November, 1772, para 6.

6 W W Hunter : *The Annals of Rural Bengal (reprint of 6th edition), Calcutta, 1965, p 26*

7 *Letters from the Court of Directors to the President and Council in Bengal, dated 10th April 1771 and 28th August 1771*

8 *W W Hunter : The Annais of Rural Bengal* (reprint of 6th edition), Calcutta, 1965, p. 26.

9 *Ibid*, p. 28.

10 Letter from the President and Council to the Court of Directors, dated 12th February 1771, para 44.

11 For the traditional form of stratification between *khud-kasht* and *pahi-kashit* cultivators, see Satish Chandra : 'Some aspects of Indian, village society in Northern India during the 18th century,.in Barun De *et al* (ed), *Essays in honour of Professor S C Sarkar,* New Delhi, 1976, pp 245-264.

12 Hidavatullah Bihari : *Hidayatu'l-Qawa'id, A D 1710* (India Office MS, I.O 1286, f. 65 a), quoted, by Irfan Habib in 'Peasant and artisan resistance in Mughal India in *Colloquium on International Labour Issues,* May 1980, McGill University, Montreal pp 12-14.

13 Letter from Boughton Rous, Supervisor of Rajshahi, dated 13th April, 1771, quoted in W W Hunter : *The Annals of Rural Bengal* (reprint of 6th edition), Calcutta, 1965, p 44.

14 Letter from the President and Council to the Court of Directors dated 15th January 1773.

15 Letter from the President and Council to the Court of Directors, dated 1st March 1773.

16 Letter from Goodlad to the Committee of Revenue, dated 20th November 1782.

17 Letter from H Howorth, Agent of the Opium Contractor, to the Committee of Revenue dated 3rd March 1783.

18 Letter from Patterson to the Committee of Revenue, dated 3rd July 1783.

19 Letter from Patterson to the Committee of Revenue, dated 31st March 1783.

20 Letter from the Supervisor of Rajshahi to the Controlling Council.

21 Extract from Revenue General Letter to the Court, dated 18th October 1774.

22 *Zabanbandi* of Dirjinarain, a chief leader of the uprising, enclosed in a letter of Patterson. Preceedings of Committee of Revenue, 29 December 1783.

23 Report of the Rangpur Commission, Proceedings of Revenue Department, dated 29th March 1787.

24 Letter from Goodlad to Committee of Revenue, dated 27th January 1783.

25 *Majnu Shaher Hakikat,* a long Bengali verse on Majnu Shah and the uprisings, was composed by Jamiruddin Dafadar, a local poet of Birbhum, in 1873. The manuscript has been recently printed as an appendix to *Bidrohi Fakir Nayak Majnu Shah* (in Bengali) written by M Abdur

Rahman. The booklet has been published by Bulbul Prakashani, Calcutta, in 1971.

26 Proceeding of the Provincial Council of Revenue at Purnea, dated 14th March 1780.

27 Letter from J Champion, Collector of Murshidabad, to the Collector of Silberis, dated 14th October 1784 Committee of Revenue proceedings, dated 18th October 1784.

28 Letter from the Collector of Rangpur to the Committee of Revenue, dated 18th January 1786. *MSS Rangpur District Records*, vol. 23, pp. 20-22.

29 Letter fro D H McDowall, Collector of Rangpur, to Major Dunn, dated 19th March 1786. *Mss Rangpur District Records*, vol 23 p 75.

30 Letter from Goodlad to Committee of Revenue—Proceedings of Committee of Revenue, 24th March 1783.

31 *Zabanbandi* of Manickchand—enclosed in Paterson s Report, Proceedings of Committee of Revenue, 29th December 1783

32 Enclosed in Goodlad's letter—Proceedings of Committee of Revenue, 17th February 1783.

33 Letter from Goodlad—Proceedings of Committee of Revenue, 24th March 1783.

34 Letter from the Court of Directors, dated 3rd April 1760

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36 Long, James (ed) :*Selections from the Unpublished Records of Government*, 1748-49, Calcutta, 1869, p 342

37 Letter from the Collector of Laskarpur to the President of the Council, dated 4th March 1773.

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45 W W Hunter *The Annals of Rural Bengal* (reprint of 6th ed.) Calcutta, 1965, p. 44.

46 *Zabanbandi* of Jaguissar Das Tekedar of the taluk of Dimla—enclosed in Paterson's letter to Committee of Revenue, dated 29th December 1783.

47 Zabanbandi of Manickchand, *ibid*.

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*JAGANNATH PATHY**

The United States Intervention in Third World Rural Policies

DURING THE 1950s and early 1960s, several U.S foundations, notably the Ford Foundation, spread the message of community development to Third World governments (Srinivas and Panini, 1973 : 199) Douglas Ensminger of the Ford Foundation played a crucial role in selling the strategy to the Indian government. He enjoyed ready access to the Prime Minister, cabinet ministers, Planning Commission, and top bureaucrats Recently he recalled : I fed program ideas into India through the same channels. To keep me informed the Planning Commission sent me... its working documents.. with an understanding that ideas and suggestions from me were always welcome. The Planning Commission always expected feedback of my critical observations following a field trip–and this I did. (cited in Rosen, 1985-53).

In fact for over fifteen years, the office of the Ford Foundation in New Delhi was regarded as a participant in the generation of ideas and in developing new rural development program strategies. In 1952, Ensminger procured $2.2 million from the Ford Foundation for village development projects and training centres for rural leaders in India and Pakistan In a few months, the mammoth community development programme was formally launched with an average annual assistance of $5 million from the Ford Foundation and a total of about $14 million from the U S. Department of Agriculture and US AID (Chandrasekhar, 1965; 155).

Likewise in the late 1950s, the Comilla experiment in East Pakistan was carried out by the Ford Foundation with technical help from Michigan University. The Pueblo projects in Mexico, Lilongve land development programme in Malavi, Jezira stettlement scheme in Sudan, and the Rural Reconstruction movement in Thailand, are some of the well-known foreign inspired community development experiments. Notwithstanding marginal differences between these projects, the common objectives were to increase agricultural production by stimulating farmers to farm on modern lines and thereby, bring rural society into the matrix of the national and international economy. This comprehensive self-help movement was expected to lead the Third World to a 'take-off' stage of development. It was designed to promote a better quality of life for the whole community and to evoke community participation in all developmental activities. In some countries, the *Panchayati raj*

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type 'decentralised' administrative infrastructure was created to effectively implement this rural development policy.

The striking postulate of the policy was that planning and execution were to be based on traditions and cultural values of the people and all households involved in a spirit of cooperation in an informal consensus mechanism. Ignoring inherited disparities in the rural social structure was instrumental in widening the already existing divisions among the various agrarian classes. Subsidized inputs, credit, extension services, marketing and other advantages went to the substantial farmers while the poor majority continued to remain outside the organization and functioning of the program (Dube, 1967 : 82-83) The *Panchayati Raj* instead of restructuring rural power, legitimised and consolidated the already existing political inequality (Pathy, 1981).

The crux of the programme was the idea that exogenous forces alone could stimulate the motivation for change in rural society. This facilitated adoption of Western technologies and 'aid'.

Leave alone the political leadership, even the so-called value free scholars, never questioned the political and ideological significance of the programme which originated from a doubtful source. Instead they reacted favourably However, the scarcity of food and employment led to unrest among the rural poor and forced the international and national planners to reorient the rural policy.

Prelude to Green Revolution

In the 1960s, Community Development Schemes became more and more shallow and were finally dropped altogether. Ensminger of the Ford Foundation had already suggested that the Indian Prime Minister and Planning Commission seek the advice of American experts. Accordingly, the chief economist of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, S. Johnson, had headed a team which presented the Food Crisis Report in 1959. The recommendations included higher price for food grains, increased distribution of chemical fertilizers, managerial improvment of water supplies, and concentration of development efforts in irrigated areas with the highest potential to raise grain output The Indian government accepted the Ten-point Intensive Agricultural District Program (IADP) in 1960. The Ford Foundation, contributing $ 10.5 million, pioneered the IADP in fifteen districts in 1961; it was subsequently extended to 114 districts by 1965. When the Ministry of Food and Agriculture showed some reluctance, Ensminger threatened that they would withdraw aid unless the Indian government met its commitment (Rosen, 1985 : 77). The Ford Foundation thus succeeded in rearing its brainchild, the IADP. This development strategy, overtly concentrated on the rural rich in developed regions and supplied them with liberal credit, subsidized inputs, price incentives, technical advice and market facilities.

Although Ford Foundation was instrumental in implementing this elitist technocratic approach to agricultural development, the American Embassy, US AID mission, the MIT Centre, Peace Corps, World Bank and

Rockefeller Foundation, to name only the most important influencing agents, forced India to rely more on market incentives to raise farm output. It is worth noting that since 1955, the MIT centre under the directorship of Max Millikan, the Ex-CIA director of economic research, was involved to extensive fieldwork and operational research on Indian planning. It also cooperated with Indian research institutions and provided fellowships to train Indian scholars in the United State. The Centre thus influenced the overall strategy of the Second and Third Fiver Year Plans of India. The MIT Centre received grants from the Ford Foundation for ten years. Its director has this to say of the role of the Centre : Certainly from the standpoint of our being helpful to the U.S. government, this is the part of our programme which has paid the biggest dividends so far.....(we) are now having some real influence in Washington. (Cited in Rosen, 1985 : 113).

Like its financier—the Ford Foundation—the MIT centre pleaded for a change in rural policy. Though the centre was forced to relinquish its surveillance in 1965, when its CIA connections were exposed, it had already manipulated a support base among self-seeking university teachers, politicians, members of the Planning Commission, and the bureaucracy.

Similarly, the Ford Foundation impressed upon the Pakistan government to establish a powerful planning commission under the expert guidance of Harvard University faculty. With the advent of Ayub Khan's regime in Pakistan, the insidious takeover of the Planning Commission by American experts was complete (Waterston, 1963). Klemme of the Ford Foundation in Pakistan brought his office into a key area of policy making. The Harvard Advisory Group (HAG) received support to the tune of $7 million during 1962-70 from the Ford Foundation, USAID, and World Bank. Richard Gilbert of the HAG influenced economic policy in Pakistan during three Five Year Plans. In addition, the Ford Foundation played a crucial role in establishing the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE). This Institute received grants of about $3 million during 1959-69, and was backed by a series of American Universities (Rosen, 1985; 66-67). In the early 1960s, all these agencies were responsible for a farm policy concentrating on sustantial farmers in well endowed areas.

The Ford Foundation provided funds to Syracuse University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to finance programs for sending Americans overseas for two years to work inside the governments of the Third World in order to 'help' them and prepare worthwhile agricultural development projects. The U.S. government too spent several million dollars in dozens of countries through similar projects. The USAID had similar overseas project contracts with some 71 U.S. Universities in 1964, involving about $ 165 million (Evans, 1969 : 66, 182). These scholars, besides advising Third World governments, represented them in negotiating loans from the World Bank (e.g. Kenya), and were employed in several regional economic development organizations (e.g. Colombia). With a few exceptions, they argued for a new deal for Third World agriculture that essentially prepared a fertile ground for the implementation of the so-called 'green revolution'.

Green Revolution Miracle : Sell out to the U.S.

The Norman E. Borlaug team's momentous discovery of high yielding varieties (HYVs) of wheat, generously supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, was advertised as the panacea for all food problems in the Third World. Theodore Schultz's, *Transforming Traditional Agriculture* provided the agro-economic justification. The U.S. agencies contributed financial and ideological support to implement the strategy. Basically, the strategy was designed to increase agricultural output in the Third World by creating a narrow stratum of capitalist farmers, termed' model farmers'. It also aimed at integrating agricultural production with the market economy, both domestic and international. The crucial thrust of the strategy was to enhance the dependence of the Third World on foreign capital, technology, know-how, seeds, pesticides, fertilisers, agricultural machinery etc. It was soon introduced in Pakistan, Nigeria, Colombia, Phillipines, Ethiopia, Bangladesh and India.

At the behest of World Bank and USAID, the Third Five Year Plan (1968-73) of Ethiopia stimulated green revolution and export oriented agricultural production (Sisaye and Stommes, 1980 : 163). The implementation of individual projects remained under the control of the World Bank or USAID.

The HYV package reached India in 1966-67. Wheat production increased from 12 million tonnes in 1967 to 26 million tonnes in 1972. But the early promise was not maintained (Palmer, 1973). During 1975-85, foodgrain production expanded at 2.4 percent per annum. But significantly, the per capita availability of foodgrain fell from 470 gm per day in 1961 to 438 gm in 1984, when India harvested the biggest crop in its history (151.4 million tonnes). There has been a conspicuous decline in per capita production of foodgrains in some parts of India. For example, during 1973-83, it declined from 170 Kg to 110 Kg in West Bengal, from 63 to 45 Kg in Kerala, and from 263 to 187 kg in Rajasthan. Although 26 million tonnes of food grains are stored in government warehouses, only 0.3 million tonnes have been given for Food for Work programmes and more than half of the Indian population, lacking purchasing power, go to bed on half-empty stomachs.

That the green revolution strategy, being capital and technology intensive, aggravates inequality and increases unemployment has now been definitively established. The process of depeasantization has been accelerated and rural poverty and unemployment increased. Hence, notwithstanding the technological changes in certain regions, the old relations of production, bondage and servitude continued although in different forms (Saini, 1976 : 1804-6). The direct cultivators have been forced to substitute traditional techniques through indebtedness (Rayer, 1980). The green revolution displaced legumes in the traditional diet of the poor and intensified their protein-calorie malnutrition. This rural improverishment and nutritional deterioration is common throughout the Third World.

Initially, we were told that the HYV seed-fertiliser-irrigation-technology

was scale neutral and that small farmers would benefit as much as large farmers. But it is an established fact that despite high rates of growth, the incidence of rural poverty has increased. World Bank itself estimated in 1980 that over 750 million people or about 20 per cent of world's population lived in absolute poverty (World Bank, 1981).

The Third World rural crisis is not merely a crisis of production, but also one of distribution (Jacoby, 1975). The argument that faster and faster increases in production would alleviate poverty thus cannot be supported.

Who reaped the maximum benefit from the package? Obviously the multinational corporations manufacturing fertiliser, pesticide and tractors. It is estimated that about 60 per cent of the cost of production of wheat in the new strategy finds its way into imports (Sau, 1972 : 1575). In 1977, Cargill and Continental Grain cornered the market on HYV wheat multiplied in Mexico for global distribution (Morgan, 1979). The giant U.S. farm-machine company, Massey-Ferguson, has been busy selling tractors to green revolution farmers. Several U.S. companies like International Harvester and Caterpillar, with their obsolete technology, have invested in the production of farm equipment in the Third World Multinational Corporations and have often joined 'aid' giving agencies to block technological developments in fertiliser, pesticides (Mehta, 1983). The World Bank played an important role in undermining local interests (Menon, 1980). There is growing evidence that MNCs have been dumping hazardous pesticides which are banned or severely restricted in their home countries (Rahman, 1983 : 80) The highly toxic pesticides causing cancer in human beings are aldrin, chlordane, endrin, lindane etc. They are freely used in the Third World. The FAO has estimated that on an average 10,000 persons die every year due to pesticide poisoning. There seems to be little awakening in the Third World about pesticide poisoning and acute toxicity resulting in death in many cases. There is an alternative to the massive use of chemical fertilisers, pesticides and farm machinery, which involves little capital while absorbing a great deal of human labour (FAO, 1976). But it remains unutilised in the interests of the MNCs.

With the green revolution sweeping across the world, more and more invaluable and irreplaceable genes have disappeared. Today, the USA holds 22 per cent of the world germ-plasm collection followed by USSR (7%), India and Malayasia (6% each). Germ-plasm is the genetic character added to new varieties of crops. The substantial majority of this germ-plasm lies in the Third World, but it has been bred in the North, specially the United States, which markets its new varieties at great profit around the world. The pace of genetic erosion is so profound that before the end of this century, most of the crop germ-plasm will be gone and the world will be left with a handful of amorphous collections of highly vulnerable HYVs (Mooney, 1983). A few of the large MNCs led by Royal Dutch/Shell, Ciba-Geigy and Sandoz have acquired hundreds of seed companies and have aggressively moved into the Third World with their plant-breeding biotechnology, pesticides and herbicides.

Export-Oriented Agriculture : A Treat for Multinational Agribusiness

The gamut of U.S. inspired and promoted rural policies in the Third World remains incomplete without a consideration of export-oriented agricultural strategy and the shedding of crocodile tears for the rural underprivileged. In recent years, there has been a phenomenal increase in direct and indirect agribusiness. Within a short time, Thailand, for instance, became the biggest exporter of bananas largely due to the U.S. company, Castle and Cook. The U.S government recognised :

Some of the best investments and sales opportunities for American companies in Thailand continue to be in the agribusiness sector. With the government's development plans....sales prospects look particularly good for exporters of agricultural and food processing machinery and equipment as well as a wide variety of products and services needed for planned development of the rural economy (USA, 1977).

Likewise, the major exportable agricultural commodity is groundnuts in Senegal and Niger; coffee in Colombia, Haiti, El Salvador, Guatemala, Brazil and Ethiopia; tea in Sri Lanka; cocoa in Ghana; sugar in Hawaii, Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand; and so on. The MNCs dominate the trade. For example, just three MNCs control 75 per cent of the banana trade, six account for 70 per cent of the cocoa trade, and another six control 85 to 90 per cent of trade in leaf tobacco (TWN, 1985 : 21). The area under export-crop cultivation is expanding at the cost of food crops. For instance, in the Philippines, land area devoted to export crops has increased from about 35 per cent of food crop land in 1963 to almost 45 per cent by 1976. In Malayasia, the percentage of total crop devoted to rubber, oil palm and coconuts has risen from 74 per cent in 1960 to 86 per cent in 1975 (Young *et. al*, 1980:218-219). At the inspiration of IMF-World Bank, the Sri Lankan government announced in 1983 that about 14000 hectares of land under the accelerated Mahaweli programme would be available for technology oriented 'non-peasants' of the 'higher income group' for crops like cotton, sugarcane, soyabean and vegetables (Shanmugaratnam, 1984). In Chiapas state of Mexico, most of the suitable land has been turned over to coffee production. In Central America and the Caribbean, more than half the agricultural land has been put under cultivation for export (Collins and Lappe, 1977).

Mexico supplies U.S. with more than half its vegetables while infant deaths associated with malnutrition are common. Half of central America's agricultural produce is exported whereas a third of her people consume less than half of the required protein intake. Africa, which has a higher incidence of protein-calorie malnutrition, is ironically a net exporter of barley, beans, peanuts, fresh vegetables and cattle (Lappe and Collins, 1977:15).

U.S. based MNCs have been purchasing land in several Third World countries. For instance, between 1964-70, they bought nearly 32 to 35 million hectares of agricultural land in Brazil alone (Feder, 1977:563). Of course. U.S. citizens and corporations enjoy 'parity rights' with local citizens

in over a dozen countries like the Philippines in matters of exploiting and utilising agricultural land, forest resources and minerals, and in running public utilities. Crops being subject to international price fluctuations, the fortunes of even the substantial cash-crop producing peasants remain uncertain. On the other hand, the MNCs make huge profits from cheap labour and benefit from funds and services of government agricultural programs.

U.S. agencies including IBRD and IMF have been encouraging export-oriented agricultural growth in the Third World Countries. For example, Togo, receiving $ 10 million from the World Bank in 1974, found that the total amount was earmarked solely for the development of cash crops like coffee and cocoa (Dumont and Cohen, 1980:35). Similarly, since 1977, the World Bank strategy for agricultural development in Sri Lanka emphasised and provided subsidies for replanting and fertilising export crop plantations and agro-industries and sought incentives like tax holidays for non-traditional exports and processing of sugar, milk products, livestock production and fisheries (Shanmugaratnam, 1984). About half of the World Bank's allotment to agricultural projects in Brazil, Paraguay and Chile is reserved for cattle raising for export. The Latin Amercian Agribusiness Corporation, which was founded by the Bank of America and received $ 17 million from USAID, assists in this drainage of food stuffs from Latin America.

'Concern' for Rural Poor

In the mid 1970s, several of these agencies responsible for escalating rural unemployment, hunger, poverty and illiteracy, suddenly seemed to have realised that something ought to be done for the rural poor—the small peasants, tenants and landless. World Bank led the way. It observed that "rural development is a strategy to improve the economic and social life of the rural poor," "to reduce poverty, increase production and raise productivity", "to modernise and monetize rural society". However, it did not alter its emphasis on "lending to larger scale farmers when it is necessary to raise their production in order to increase food supply and/or contribute to exports" (IBRD, 1975:3, 12). The reformulation from 'trickle down' theory was more to legitimize foreign aid in the eyes of the public than a strategy for the rural poor. Billions of dollars continued to be channeled towards the landed elite, either directly by supporting the commodities they produce (e.g. livestock) or indirectly by financing projects which benefitted most, such as irrigation schemes and roads. Loan projects serve to enhance the sales and profits of multinational agribusiness (Feder, 1977; Falcon, 1970). Finally, the concern for the absolute poor is also aimed at benefitting the privileged. McNamara said, "a continual increase in inequality gives rise to a growing danger for the political stability... In the long run this development will be an advantage for the privileged, as also for the poor" (cited in Bennoholdt-Thomson, 1980:17).

Programmes like Food for Work and Rural Works Programme (RWP) were implemented in several countries, which got support not only from the World Bank but also USAID, as in Bangladesh. World Bank cautioned that

these programmes should not be undertaken in a manner which would antagonize the richer enterprising section of the areas. Small wonder, that these schemes have strengthened the power of the dominant classes. In India, there are special programmes for small farmers (SFDA), marginal farmers and agricultural labourers (MFAL), besides of course, FFW, National Minimum Needs Programme (NMEP), National Rural Employment Programme, (NREP) and Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). The actual expenditure is so paltry that it requires no scepticism to conclude that these schemes concentrate on a group much smaller than the national target group; nonetheless, it did temporarily counteract the rising disillusionment among the masses. Meanwhile, households below the poverty line have increased from 38 per cent in 1961 to 48 per cent in 1978. And in 1980, the official estimate was 249 million below the poverty line i.e., more than half the total population.

With all the concern for the poor, 450,000,000 people in the world suffer from hunger and malnutrition, 500,000,000 people are unemployed, 870,-000,000 cannot and write, and 2,000,000,000 people do not have safe water to.drink (Sivard, 1981).

The rural policies discussed above bring out clearly the role played by the U.S. and its various agencies. The following section deals with the mechanisms through which they persuade and pressurise 'independent' Third World countries to accept such strategies.

Politics of Aid

The United States' foreign aid is extended to obtain immediate economic gains for U.S. businessmen, and enforce 'open door' policies facilitating freedom of access to raw materials, trade and investment opportunities. This ensures increasing economic, political and military dependence on the U.S. by the receivers of the aid (Magdoff, 1969). As President Kennedy put it:

Foreign aid is a method by which the U.S. maintains a position of influence and control around the world, and sustains a good many countries which would definitely collapse or pass into the communist bloc (Cited in Magdoff, 1969:117).

The ex-president of World Bank, Eugene R. Black asserts:

Our foreign aid programs constitute a distant benefit to American business...provides a sustantial and immediate market for U.S. goods and services...stimulates development of new overseas markets for U.S. companies...Orients national economies toward a free enterprise system in which U.S. firms can prosper (Black, 1965:23).

The U.S. works out what it wants its debtors to do. In India, as elsewhere, they have been putting pressure on the Indian government to widen the sphere of operation for private capital in general and for foreign private capital in particular. When India faced exchange problems in 1956-57, the government approached the World Bank for help. Its chairman, Eugene

Black, replied to the Indian minister of finance in Sept. 1956.

I should like to emphasise once again that India's interest lies in giving private enterprise, both Indian and foreign, every encouragement to make its maximum contribution to the development of the economy. I have the distinct impression that the potentialities of private enterprise are commonly underestimated in India and that its operations are subject to unnecessary restrictions there... We feel that we have to consider the pace and scale of our further loan operations in India from time to time in the light of economic conditions and prospects and taking into consideration the economic policies pursued by your government" (cited in Das Gupta, 1970:276)

Willy-nilly, the Indian government accepted the dictation and assured the Bank that it was not at all hostile to private enterprise, domestic or foreign. A temporary salvation package for the Indian plan followed. Foreign private investment increased from $ 1007 million to $ 2104 million between December 1956 and March 1965 Meanwhile, in 1964, a World Bank team headed by Bernard Bell called for severe devaluation of the Indian currency, abolition of many remaining trade controls and an emphasis on high technology agriculture. Abruptly the U.S. food aid was suspended; India was warned by the U.S. against accepting Russian aid (Payer, 1975:174). This was the time when India faced a major food shortage and was involved in the Indo-Pakistan war. India was forced in 1966 to a massive devaluation (37.5 per cent) of its currency. The same year, the World Bank and USAID exerted specific pressure for favourable conditions for foreign investment in India's fertilizer industry, import liberalization and elimination of most domestic controls as well. The USAID provided funds for importing fertiliser, but when some U.S. companies refused to accept the Indian government's plea to have its own pricing and distribution system, the USAID, put food shipments from the U.S. on a month to month basis until India let Standard Oil of Indiana market fertiliser at its own prices. At the same time, part of the price paid for the 20 million tonnes of wheat shipped from the U.S as food aid during the two ciritical years, was the acquisition of a controlling interest in supposedly Indian fertiliser companies by American companies (Dumont and Cohen, 1974:173)

Food aid to the Third World under PL 480 was accounted for at the prices on the protected home market in the United States, which was much higher than the international market price. Shipping was also reserved for American protected high cost shipping and charged to the aid receiving country.

The disposal of bulging food surpluses at that time was very much in the U.S. interest. Indeed anything from 70 to 90 per cent of 'aid' funds were earmarked for imports from the imperialist powers at high prices. Aid became an instrument of direct political influence and dictation. In 1966, the U.S. openly threatened discontinuation of aid to Guinea in reply to its government's decision to expel the notorious U.S. Peace Corps members from the country. Likewise in 1963, the U.S. government threatened that no aid would be given to Latin American governments if they failed to break

economic contacts with Cuba within sixty days. Similar denial or termination of aid has been frequently used to call to order or punish recalcitrant Third World governments.

And yet the Third World's dependence on foreign aid from the U.S. and its agents seems to be insatiable. In 1984, the foreign debt of the Third World exceeded the figure of $ 810 billion. In 1981, the annual interest payments on foreign debts was $ 51 billion. About one-fourth of the export earnings of non-oil developing countries have to be set aside for debt servicing alone. In several countries like Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, Zambia, Bolivia and Peru, the annual debt service payment accounts for more than their total earnings from exports. In 1982, the gross foreign borrowing of Third World countries amounted to $ 140 billion of which debt servicing constituted 77 per cent of the total loan.

Countries that apply to the IMF for short-term loans to stabilize their currencies are usually in desperate or close to desperate straits. The IMF sets up conditions before handing out the money, that fulfill the goals of the U.S. administration by enforcing the rules of the game. It insists on elimination of controls over imports and exports, free exchange rates, devaluation of the local currency and strong fiscal controls within the country by institution of wage and price controls and balanced budget (Payer, 1975).

When Latin economies were found incapable of meeting their foreign debt obligations, the U.S, and IMF compelled the debtors to give priority to increasing their foreign exchange receipts. Twelve Latin American countries signed the conditionality agreement with the IMF in 1982-83 alone. The IMF recipe of reduced public spending, import cuts, export stimuli, salary freezes etc., to raise extra surplus for debt servicing resulted in sharp cuts in social expenditures and the strict 'austerity' programmes had serious political ramifications in Brazil, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Philippines, Sudan and other places. In the Philippines, foreign debt shot up to a whopping $ 26 billion from $ 2 billion in 1972. The Peso is regularly devalued even as inflation and unemployment reach new heights. In Peru, with an external debt of $ 14 billion, inflation rose from 73 per cent in 1981 to 106 per cent in 1984 and in 1983, unemployment and underemployment reached a staggering 63 per cent of the economically active population. In Bolivia, inflation rose from 25 per cent in 1981 to 328 per cent in 1983 to 2177 per cent in 1984 and is now over 3000 per cent. Interest obligations on foreign debt amount to about $ 400 million a year (Herman and Petras, 1985 : 1151). In Uganda, a U.S. dollar was equal to some 60 Ugandian shillings in 1980; it is now 650 shillings. IMF loans have led to immiseration and pauperisation of the working people. At the same time, the debt crisis is enhanced. Consequently, Peru recently refused to negotiate with the IMF and restricted foreign debt payments to ten per cent of export earnings.

The consequences of the 'structural adjustment' programmes forced upon Third World countries by the IMF as *quid pro quo* for the rescheduling of their debt to multinational commercial banks has been plainly disastrous for these countries. A sharp decline in lending of American commercial banks,

as also resultant socio-political unrest in client states like Chile, Mexico, Philippines etc., has prompted a shift in U.S. policy to 'growth oriented approach' to the Third World problem of debt, as was evident from the annual meet of IMF and IBRD at Seoul in September, 1985.

On an average $ 4.5 came as income into the U.S. for each dollar invested in the Third World. In asbsolute terms, the total income received on U.S. foreign investments rose from less than $ 2 billion in 1950 to $ 11 billion in 1970 and $ 76 billion in 1980. And additionally, U.S. and U.S. agents collected sensitive and vital information on the Third World. For instance, World Bank's Policy of 'global tender' not only ensures penetration of MNCs into the Third World, but also its experts investigate the general political economy of the country at the cost of project funds. In several countries it maintains permanent missions to advise on various economic and political issues.

Why do Third World governments and people not see the merit of self-reliance ? In most cases, they cannot escape the trap without a radical restructuring of their internal political system and its place in international socio-political relations. Thus, a large number of societies depend more or less solely on international capital for development. Take for instance Bangladesh where foreign aid accounts for virtually the whole of the development budget. It therefore accepts all terms and conditions, dictates and interferences. The influence of World Bank, IMF, and the U.S. embassy has become a pervasive phenomenon in the country's economic, social, cultural and political life. Though total aid has been increasing and stood at about $ 17 billion in 1984, about 85 per cent of the population is now below the poverty line and 60 per cent is critically poor. Forty per cent of the available labour time is unemployed (Ahmad, 1985:30-37). To some extent, the same was the case with Sri Lanka during 1965-69 and again since 1977, when the IMF-World Bank-U.S. shaped the "liberalisation Policy." In 1980-84, more than 60 per cent of the budgetary provision for rural development depended on foreign assistance. Besides, the funding of the Integrated Rural Development Projects in nine districts came from U.S. agencies (Shanmugaratnam, 1985; Lakshman, 1985).

Indoctrination and the 'Captive Mind'

There is a social basis for the articulation of foreign interests. Training and institution building are more essential here than outright distribution of patronage. U.S. agencies have given considerable emphasis to training, research, extension services and influencing researchers and academics in the Third World.

In India, as in almost all Third World Countries, various U.S. agencies have acquired control over the entire field of agricultural education, research and extension. This control has been systematically utilised for pushing the green revolution and export-oriented cropping. Consequently, there is little work on dry farming practices, high protein crops, incorporation of local germplasm in plantbreeding, appropriate soil and water conservation

policies, and suitable crop rotation patterns to reduce dependence on chemical fertiliser and pesticides (Abrol, 1983).

Indo-U.S. co-operation in agricultural research dates back to the efforts of the U.S. government to help India increase food production. In 1953, F.W. Parker of the Technical Co-operative Mission arranged a number of studies determining the fertility status of soils. This laid the basis for the establishment of a chain of soil testing laboratories aided by USAID which subsequently paved the way for the introduction of chemical fertilisers in India. In 1955, Rockefeller Foundation and five U.S. land grant universities assisted Indian agricultural universities and research institutions and suggested a curricula appropriate to reorienting scholars to meet the challenge of introducing HYVs of maize, sorghum and millets. The U.S. gave $ 35 million for laboratory equipment and libraries. Every year, 35 fellowships were instituted for training Indian students at U.S. institutions. Rockefellers provided $ 21.3 million upto 1973 and arranged for several visiting professors to visit India. It also provided travel grants for Indian government officials and university administrators to go to the U.S. In 1982, Ralph W. Cummings, the Director of Rockefeller Foundation's Indian agricultural research programme laid down guidelines for the establishment and development of agricultural universities. These guidelines focussed on higher agricultural productivity through diffusion of fertiliser responsive varieties. The narrow genetic base of HYVs, disease and pest suspectibility of some of the parent varieties and the existence of vast monoculture soon exposed the crops to attacks by pests and diseases. As noted earlier, in the mid-1960s, USAID provided large loans to import much needed fertilisers. The U.S. and World Bank put pressure on the Indian government to encourage MNCs investment in local fertiliser production. Such a strategy could not have been pursued smoothly without the support of Indian agricultural scientists trained in the service of American interests (Abrol, 1983).

From 1952-72, the Ford Foundation spent $ 16 million providing generous grants to persons, institutions and government on a wide variety of nation building activities. It established and/or funded the Institute of Economic Growth, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, National Council of Applied Economic Research, Indian Statistical Institute and Institutes of Management at Calcutta and Ahmedabad. The Foundation trained about 50,000 extension workers. The National Institute of Community Development was established with the help of USAID and Michigan State University. The whole pattern of education and research was thus modelled on the philosophy and value system of the donor country. U.S. experts provided advice on how to organise and develop science and technology, decided the priorities of research, recommended developmental models. Performance of major research and educational institutes like UGC, CSIR, ICAR, etc. is reviewed by experts from the U.S. and Western Europe. This delinking of science and technology from the concrete socio-political contexts has proved to be stultifying.

USEFI claims to have sent 2380 Indians to the USA and 1265 American

scholars to India between 1952 and 1972. An estimated 5000 Indians were sent to the U.S. for further training by 1965. The exchange programmes, study and research grants are used to glorify the American way of life (Krishna Kumar, 1980). About 7600 U.S. peace corps volunteers are active in 61 Third World countries (Cohn and Wood, 1980). Their major objective is to influence the development choices and prevent anv going over to the 'communist camp' (Shriver, 1964 : 50,8). In the Philippines, under the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement, 1951, U S. advisers influenced policies and conducted imperialist propaganda in every strategic branch. Some are on the payroll of the C.I.A. PL. 480 proceeds finance propaganda campaigns and exchange programmes in the receiving country. Similarly, as many as 80 per cent of the social scientists in Ethiopia are trained in North America and approximately 30 per cent of the expatriate academic staff in the University comes from North America. (Jimadu, 1985 · 50-51). Tanzania, despite the Arusha declaration, has strong academic relations with the U.S. (Ake, 1979).

Scholars are trained to believe that the backwardness of the Third World is due to cultural reasons, and development is possible only through the continued diffusion of capital, technology, and ideology from Western societies. This perspective of development by totally ignoring class and national exploitation, tacitly eulogises neo-colonial domination and certifies external incentives as the *sine qua non* of development. The model provided perfect justification for pillage (Pathy, 1982; Tullis, 1973; Frank, 1971) Third World scientists were thus indoctrinated.

American trained professionals, bureaucratic and political dollar addicts and compradores articulated the interests of the imperialist masters for pecuniary gains. It may be recalled that when Sihanouk rejected U.S. aid in 1963, there was strong opposition from this section which led to the overthrow of the legitimate government and the installation of a puppet regime. In India, many erstwhile employees of the World Bank hold important positions in the Reserve Bank, Prime-Minister's secretariat, economic ministries, and Planning Commission (Bhambhri, 1985). Several bureaucrats are linked with MNCs. Using the techniques of lucrative jobs and other incidental benefits as a *quid pro quo*, imperialism has penetrated the decision making structures of Third World governments and bureaucracies (Bhambhri. 1970). When the conditions of the recent IMF loan were criticised, a powerful lobby of Indian academics, politicians and bureaucrats openly came out in support of IMF and World Bank. One of the top Indian economists, speaking against the criticism said, that the fact that the IMF "an expert storehouse of financial and monetary information concerning most countries of the world," has sanctioned the loan should itself be "a matter of great jubilation to proponents of the cause of the Third World.... That such an organisation should have found India so highly credit worthy is a matter to be deeply pondered over" (Sic.), (Brahmanananda, 1982 : 3, 1).

Today some 50,000 U.S. servicemen are stationed all around the world, in some 1500 military installations in 32 countries. In the Philippines, it has

as many as 20 military bases, containing nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons, that can be used as a launching pad for aggression in Asia and middle-east. The U.S. has openly used biochemical and geophysical weapons against independent, socialist countries. It has perfected a large number of plant-destroying agents, including genetically mutated breeds of pests and rodents.

Without fear of exaggeration, it can be stressed that the expansion of MNCs into the Third World is made possible with the massive and unremitting application of the power of the U.S. and its agencies like World Bank and IMF. This application of power takes place directly as in the Dominican Republic, Vietnam and a long string of CIA-organised coups in Iran, Gautemala, Bangladesh etc. It is done indirectly through funding and arming client dictatorial regimes and sub-imperialist gendarmes to repress their own people. Naked political intervention and subversion including engineered political murders, are too well known to need any recounting here. Inconvenient regimes have been subverted, and uncooperative rulers removed or assassinated to be replaced by more pliable ones. In the Third World, 54 countries are under military rule. Since 1960, there have been at least 76 military coups which, in most cases, ousted liberal and legitimate governments. In this scenario, the contribution of the U.S. government and its agencies is enormous.

The U.S. and the C.I.A. fund reactionary groups and individuals in the Third World when they consider them friendly to U.S. imperialism. They propped up pro-west regimes in Africa, (Zaire, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Sudan, Nigeria and Morocco), which welcomed foreign capital to modernize their countries. But where this was not possible, the U.S. stirred up communal, linguistic, regional movements to destabilise governments. The CIA recruits informants from the government, army, intelligence, education, culture, industry and business. In India; the widely known Himalayan border studies project and more recently project Brahamaputra, sponsored by the CIA, were designed to study ethnic tensions and encourage separatist elements in the country. The CIA maneouvered the rise of Mobutu Seko to power during 1966 while the Congo (Zaire) was in turmoil. (Lemarchand, 1975). It struck at the Sandinista National Liberation Front in Nicaragua, destabilized the Manley government in Jamaica, smuggled mercenary groups into Grenada, and carried out an armed invasion in 1983.

Latin American countries have been saddled with a string of military dictatorships—Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Grenada, Honduras etc.—propped up by U.S. imperialism and sustained by its economic and military aid. Every attempt at reforming the economy, at curbing the power of the oligarchs and multinationals, at democratic reform have been met with stiff resistance, ranging from coups, as in Guatemala and Chile, to direct armed intervention as in the Bay of Pigs crisis. In El Salvador, since late 1979, several thousands have died and many hundred thousands have been driven into exile. There is deliberate and extensive use of fascist terror, repression,

dictatorial regimes are utilised against the revolutionary upsurge in Nicaragua, El Salvador and other countries.

To undercut the popular support for the revolutionary forces, the U.S. tried land reforms in El Salvador. But this mimicry of reform failed (Ram, 1983). It was not an unique experiment. To forestall a perceived communist threat the U.S. inspired such showy land reforms in Taiwan; in Vietnam, the exigencies of counter-insurgency demanded land reform to placate the peasantry. The IMF team advised the military rulers on such reorganization of their economy in Indonesia, Brazil, Argentina etc., soon after elected governments or popular rulers were overthrown.

Yet, the fact that the U.S. has to rely more and more on the use of naked force, on multilateral aid-giving agencies rather than direct interference, demonstrates its weakess in the strategy of cooptation and indoctrination. Everywhere its social basis is eroding, but the weakening trend may make it more brutal.

Rural development in the Third World rests on dismantling the citadels of obscurantist and reactionary national and neo-colonial vested interests. Self-reliance, appropriate technology, new international economic order, basic human needs approach etc., can have meaning only when there is a fundamental structural transformation of national and international society by the people themselves. Meanwhile, the need is to demystify the operaiton of the system and contribute to the rise of consciousness of the toiling people.

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India's Nuclear Policy : Case Against the Bomb

WIDE CONCERN is felt among Indian people at the news appearing from time to time that Pakistan is manufacturing a nuclear bomb. The paper seeks to analyse the political factors that led to the emergence of the atom bomb in the international arena and eventual pursuit for it in the Indo-Pak subcontinent which can be related to the policies pursued by the aggressive forces in the United States. The policy of nuclear deterrent for India is examined in this context.

The production of nuclear bomb was a part of the global strategy of the U.S. and British Governments led by the monopoly capital to stall the growth of the socialist forces led by the Soviet Union, a policy that continued unabated since the success of the October revolution.

Contrary to the view widely held, the nuclear bomb, was not used against Japan to shorten the Second World War. The bombs were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki to wrest the initiative of the war against Japan from the Soviet Union which had just entered the war against her. Japan was already on the verge of collapse and the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were dropped with the full knowledge of the U.S. Government that Japan was desperately sending signals for armistice.

The dates for dropping of atom bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9 in 1945 respectively, were chosen with particular care. It was already known to the U.S. Government that Soviet Union was expected to declare war against Japan on August 8. For, Stalin gave the assurance in the Yalta Conference in February 1945 that the Soviet Union would do so within three months from the day of cessation of war in Europe..The European war ended on May 8 and the Soviet Union was to enter the war with Japan on August 8, 1945. PMS Blackett showed in his widely quoted book how political, rather than military considerations, were uppermost in the minds of the U.S. strategists in manufacturing the nuclear bomb[1]. Blackett cites from an article by Norman Cousins and Thomas K Finletter in the *Saturday Review of Literature* on June 15, 1946 where the authors sought to explain why the suggestion offered by sixty four leading U.S. scientists to hold a demonstration blast to bring Japan to surrender could not be pursued :

". . . . . No, any test would have been impossible if the purpose was to knock Japan out before Russians came in—or at least before Russia could

make anything more than a token of participation prior to a Japanese collapse.... Unless we came out of the war with a decisive balance of power over Russia, we could be in no position to checkmate Russian expansion".[2]

Indeed, the manner in which Truman, accompanied by Churchill tried to intimidate Stalin with the information on the newly acquired atom bomb at Postdam in August 1945, only betrayed thier intention. Marshal Zhukov narrated in his *Reminiscences and Reflections* what took place between them. He had to say the following after Truman informed Stalin that the United States possessed a bomb of exceptional power:

"As was later reported abroad, at that moment, Churchill pinned his eyes on Stalin's face, eager to observe his reaction. However, Stalin did not betray his feelings and pretended he saw nothing special in what Truman had said. Both Churchill and many other British and American commentators subsequently surmized that Stalin had probably failed to fathom the significance of the information received".[3]

Stalin fully understood what had been talked about. After relating the conversation to Molotov, he contacted Soviet physicist Kurchatov and asked him to speed up the Soviet exercise on atom bomb. Zhukov continues:

"It was clear already that the U.S. Government was going to use the atomic bomb for reaching its imperialist goals from a position of strength. This was corroborated on August 6 and 9. Without any military need whatsoever, the Americans dropped two atomic bombs on the peaceful and densely-populated Japanese cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima".[4]

A more forthright statement made by the General entrusted with the direction of the renowned physicists engaged in the Manhattan project for manufacture of the nuclear bomb, reflected the mind of an influential section of the U.S. army. Joseph Rotblat was among the distinguished scientists working on the Manhattan project. Recounting his experiences with the project, Rotblat states:

"In March 1944, I experienced a disagreeable shock. In a casual conversation, General Leslie Groves, the head of the Manhattan project, said: 'You realize, of course, that the real purpose of making the bomb is to subdue our chief enemy, the Russians. Until then I had thought that our work was to prevent a Nazi victory. Now I was told that the weapon we were preparing was really against Russia".[5]

Rotblat left the project by the end of 1944 when it had became evident that the Germans had abandoned the move to secure the bomb for themselves.

That the nuclear weapon could become instrumental in creating tension between the two countries in the postwar world was foreseen in the perceptive minds of Einstein, Leo Szilard, Niels Bohr and a number of physicists and statesmen. Even before the bomb was actually deployed, they had tried to persuade Roosevelt to come to an agreement with Soviet Union to share its

secrets and not to use it as it would be disastrous for humanity. Rooseve passed away before he could take a decision on it.[6]

The US policy of hostility towards Soviet Union only intensified und successive Presidents. This policy of hostility eventually got extended to on of pressurising all countries with whom Soviet Union had friendly relation The non-aligned countries which received direct assistance from the Sovi Union for developing their economies and had friendly relations with h have earned the opprobrium of US suspicion. India's friendly relations wit Soviet Union has long been regarded by the US as an act of indiscretion. H criticism of U.S. policies damaging the interest of the third world countries considered motivated. The U.S. Government finds it advantageous, und the circumstances, to befriend Pakistan in her disputes with India and equi the military forces of the former to keep India under pressure. It is in th context that the paradoxes in the US policy where it concerns Pakistan can b analysed meaningfully. The U.S. professes encouragement to democrati practices but provides support to a dictatorial government in Pakistan. Th US professes non-proliferation of nuclear weapons but turns a blind eye t Pakistan's efforts to manufacture nuclear bomb.

The military rulers of Pakistan make the most of the contradictions an weaknesses in the US policy. The feudal bourgeois combine in the rulin group is incapable of building up a self-reliant economy in Pakistan. Bereft c an adequate industrial base, its comprador character is reflected in the arm deals with the United States which confer economic benefits on the influen tial section advocating a military stance in Indo-Pak relations. The con tinuance of military dictatorship in the country is to the advantage of thi group. The religious fervour with which it calls for liberation of Afghanista and Kashmir earns more of aid from the Middle Eastern states. A large inflov of foreign aid from various countries brings gains to the ruling group. Th move for the manufacture of nuclear bomb is a convenient way for the rulin group to retain its hold over the military and an atmosphere of tensio against India is essential for their continuance in power. Anti-Indian hysteri is the best antidote to the growing reasentment against the government' domestic policies which the Opposition in the country can mobilise agains it. Jingoism against India and craving for nuclear bomb are two powerfu weapons in the arsenal of the Pakistan government which can paralyse th opposition effectively.

The success of Pakisan's military rulers in carrying the people with ther cannot be ascribed to the weakness of the democratic forces within Pakista alone which cannot see through the game. Equally responsible are thos democratic forces within India who react in about the same manner when th government of India raises the issue about the threat to the security of Indi against Pakistan or advocates India's manufacturing a nuclear bomb in response to Pakistan. There is a kind of symmetry in the reaction of the progressive forces in both the countries when these sensitive issues are posed before them by the respective governments. Each sees in the other country a homogenous block of hostile population. Both fail to distinguish between

the interests of the ruling class from those of the toiling masses opposed to the former, not only in respect of their own country but also in respect of the other country.

The Government of India's stand on Pakistan's offer of a no-war pact and the suggestion for a zone of peace in the sub-continent on the plea that Pakistan could not be trusted, compromised her position before the world public opinion. It appeared inconsistent with her urging to the two world powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to conclude such a pact. There has recently been a shift in her position when Shri Rajiv Gandhi agreed to consider non-agression against each other's nuclear installations. The pity is that such a change came to effect only at the prompting of Washington. The progressive forces is India failed to take the initiative to bring about a change in the atmosphere vitiated by mutual bickering between the two countries. The softening of the US attitude towards India is however not unrelated to the new Prime Minister's professions to liberalize the operation of the foreign multinationals in the country and his moves for freet play of big capitalist forces within the country. Any swing away from the present trend may very well change to a stiffening in the attitude of the US when Pakistan will be viewed as a but end to pressurize India again. The continuance of an autocratic regime in Pakistan remains the major cause of concern in this regard.

One of the common arguments which easily confuse the minds of the population about Pakistan is to argue that the Pakistanis are united in their aggressive design against India and they cannot be trusted. It is seldom recognised that such a stance only aids the reactionary forces in Pakistan to consolidate their position within the country. Distrust about the whole population of a country blinds one towards the possibility of winning friends when the cause is just. Such mistrust proved costly for the Allies during the Second World War. The conviction of Churchill and Amery that the whole of the German population consisted of fanatical admirers of Hitler restrained the British Military Intelligence from attempting to raise resistance groups from among the German population. The news about the attempted assassination of Hitler by von Stauffenberg roused the Allied leaders belatedly to the realisation of their mistake.[7]

There is wide apprehension that if Pakistan possesses the nuclear bomb she can hold India to ransom and force her to concede unjust demands about Kashmir and other border areas so long as India does not manufacture the bomb for herself. It is, however, a matter of record that a series of confrontations or conflicts have taken place over the past decades between countries around the world where one side had to bomb while the other side did not. In all these conflicts, paradoxically, the countries in possession of the bomb found it impossible to use it even under pressing circumstances, leaving free way to the adversaries who were not in possession of it.

Among the evidence which one can cite in this regard is the blockade of Berlin by the Soviet Union in 1948. The United States, in sole possession of the nuclear bomb, was urged by Winston Chuchill to threaten Soviet Union

with its use unless she withdraw from Berlin and East Germany. The suggestion was not acted upon.[8] The possible outcome of an attack on the Soviet Union before she came to secure nuclear bomb for herself was analysed by statesmen in the United States even earlier in 1946. Henry Wallace, for instance, had warned;

"If we should attempt to destroy all principal Russian cities and her heavy industry, we might well succeed. But the immediate counter-measure which such an attack would call for, is the prompt occupation of all continental Europe by the Red Army. Would we be prepared to destroy the cities of all Europe to finish what we started"[9]

The United States was again caught in a dilemma when during the Korean war in 1950, the United Nations Forces under the leadership of General MacArthur swept northwards towards the Yalu river beyond which lay the borders of China. Mao Tse Tung declared that China was not afraid of the nuclear bomb and dubbed it as a "paper tiger". The Chinese Government warned that they would intervene in the war if the UN Forces continued their progress towards the Yalu river. The Chinese forces later did intervene and pushed the UN forces back to the 38th Parallel before a cease-fire was agreed to. The nuclear bombs stayed where they were.

A similar situation was faced by France when she met with reverses in miliatry conflicts in Indo-China in 1954. France had to give way ultimately to Vietnamese forces after her debacle at Dien Bien Phu, although she had acquired the nuclear bomb.

Pakistan's strategists must also realise that if she chose to mount a nuclear attack against India they have to face a logistic problem similar to the one U.S. strategists faced in Europe. Any nuclear attack against India has to be away from Pakistan's own border lest the radioactive fall-out affects her own army as well. This leaves her border open to being overrun by the Indian army. Considering the relative size of the population of the two countries, Pakistan's atomic bomb would remain a "paper tiger", meant for intimidation of Indian population rather than for its actual deployment.

One may consider in this context that although India could not maintain cordial relations with China over the two decades after the border clashes, it was not thought necessary for her to manufacture the atom bomb to deter any Chinese aggression. If India has been able to live with China in possession of the bomb for over two decades, she can as well live with Pakistan with the same equanimity of mind.

One should recognize in this connection that sufficient grounds for concern to Pakistan were provided when Indian carried out an underground nuclear explosion at Pokharan in May 1974. While the scientific merits of the exercise remain in doubt, the effect it had on Pakistan has been quite evident.

The pressure to drive India to manufacture an atom bomb as a deterrent to Pakistan is misdirected. It cannot but be the beginning of a policy of costly escalation of the arms race between the two countries which neither can

afford. The progressive forces in India have a special responsibility to help the democratic elements in Pakistan to assert their rights. The democratic movement in India has a firmer foundation. It works in a relatively free environment. It is in a better position to expose the manoeuvring of the reactionary forces in India to mount a frenzy against Pakistan to divert militant movement against the Government's right-wing policies. The Left and democratic forces in India have to expose the imperialist game to destabilise the condition in the Indo-Pak sub-continent. They should extend the hand of cooperation to the democratic forces in Pakistan by dissociating themselves clearly from the machinations of the reactionary forces entrenched firstly, within the Congress(I) and secondly, among some of the opposition parties in India. An unequivocal policy for peaceful coexistence and renouncing the path of nuclear weapons by them can strengthen the progressive forces in Pakistan and prevent the sub-continent from turning into a hotbed for imperialist games.

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The Fallacies of Nuclear Ambiguity

EVENTS OVER the last year or so strongly suggest that a nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan may be beginning. Despite official declarations in Islamabad that Pakistan has no intentions of manufacturing the 'bomb', its nuclear programme built with American support seems to have achieved nuclear or near-nuclear capability.

The developing circumstances pose difficult choices for India's national nuclear policy. For the past few decades, the renunciation of nuclear weapons has been a part of this policy, though, Indian nuclear capability has demonstrably existed for over a decade. In brief, official policy till the present has been to keep the nuclear option open, but not to exercise it. Faced with the developing nuclear capability of Pakistan, and the political realities of India-Pakistan relations, can this position be maintained for long? If not, what are the other options?

All available indications suggest that current national nuclear policy is one of *nuclear ambiguity*. This may be described as follows : develop nuclear capability at various levels, including the means of delivery; keep open the nuclear option; give contradictory signals to the adversary such as making official declarations denying weapons manufacture while simultaneously asserting that the adversary's moves will be met with an 'appropriate response' or 'fitting reply'. Under such circumstances, a country may either actually refrain from building nuclear weapons or else clandestinely build a small arsenal. It is pertinent to note that Pakistan is also following its own version of the strategy of nuclear ambiguity.

The consequences of this state of affairs are not difficult to foresee. Faced with Pakistan's growing nuclear capabilities, Indian policy makers cannot assume that these capabilities will not be put into effect for the acquisition of nuclear weapons. If Pakistan has the bomb, then what are the demands of India's national security? Since there is no conventional defence against nuclear weapons, the only defence is to maintain a deterrent posture, which means to acquire the capability to inflict comparable damage in a retaliatory strike. The country can then either develop this deterrent capability on its own or by entering under someone else's nuclear umbrella. Since the latter option is unpalatable, the choice narrows down to exercising one's own

nuclear option, and making nuclear weapons. In this paper, I propose to briefly examine some of the arguments which have been put forward in favour of nuclear ambiguity. Even preliminary arguments will show that nuclear ambiguity cannot be justified by any considerations of national security. I will also attempt to explore other options, to show that such options do indeed exist, and moreover, are valid and viable politically.

One of the most eloquent and articulate proponents of nuclear ambiguity has been Mr. K. Subrahmanyam. He has written a number of articles in newspapers and strategic journals, as well as books, in which he argues his point of view. In fact, K. Subrahmanyam has emerged as the principal spokesman of Indian nuclear policy before the public. One cannot but agree with many of the premises of KS's arguments, such as his contention that nuclear disarmament is not a local problem but a global one, that the NPT is a blatantly discriminatory treaty and that no self-respecting nation should be party to it. However, if we look a little more closely at the arguments made from these premises, we find that there are many gaps and omissions, and that his conclusions sometimes do not follow from the arguments. In particular, his major conclusion—that political realities today require a policy of nuclear ambiguity—does not follow from any argument put forward by him.

Let us first look at the '*deterrence argument*'. In a recent article, K. Subrahmanyam argues that "If the doctrine of deterrence–which cannot be proved or disproved–is asserted by the United States and the Soviet Union has to deal with the United States on that basis, then other nations have to deal with these powers on the same basis whether or not the countries concerned subscribed to their belief systems." In a recent interview given to *Gentleman*, he says "Our nuclear arrsenal should be geared to deterrence and not for the purpose of war."

KS goes on to argue that *deterrence is always with respect to a perceived adversary*. In his perception, as it emerges in various writings, the perceived adversary is sometimes Pakistan; sometimes it is China and sometimes it is the United States of America. To the best of my knowledge, the other nuclear powers viz. the USSR, Britain and France do not figure is his writings as perceived adversaries.

It is characteristic of KS' arguments that they do not contain any estimates of deterrence requirements. Having talked about the nuclear threat from the perceived adversary, he concludes that keeping the nuclear option is thus necessary, and hence the position of nuclear ambiguity. But can nuclear ambiguity constitute a credible deterrent to the perceived adversary? This is a question which he does not attempt to answer. But no deterrent is viable unless it is credible. As KS himself states in the passage quoted earlier, deterrence has a peculiar logic that forces itself upon its adherents.

Consider the case of the United States. According to official US policy, its nuclear weapons are not only meant to deter the use of nuclear weaponry by its adversary, but, in fact, to deter any confrontation–even with conventional weapons—with the US. US nuclear weaponry is an active instrument of

its foreign policy, with nuclear threats given on several occasions to back up US interventions in the international political arena. (Soviet nuclear weapons, according to their official policy, are only meant to deter the use of nuclear weapons by the adversary). Thus, much as a gun be used by pointing it at one's opponent and dictating terms, without actually firing it, US nuclear weapons have been used on more than two dozen occasions, since their first use in Hiroshima, in this fashion.

In 1962, during the Cuban missile crisis, the USA was able to use its nuclear weapons in the above sense to compel a political agreement on its terms. The USSR discovered that it was not enough to merely possess nuclear weapons to deter the United States from the threat of use of nuclear weapons. What was required was to achieve matching capability. In 1962, the Soviet nuclear arsenal was far smaller than that of the US. The Soviet Union went on to build matching capability at various levels of the ladder of nuclear escalation. Indeed, the deterrence doctrine logically leads to requirements of matching capability at each level of the ladder of escalation, or at least, second strike capability, namely, the ability to survive a first strike by the adversary and to launch a retaliatory strike inflicting massive and unacceptable damage on the adversary.

What this means is that if India wants to deter the USA with nuclear weaponry, it will have to build the capability to deliver thermonuclear warheads by the hundreds into the US hinterland, after absorbing a nuclear strike by the USA. What this means is a huge system of hundreds if not thousands of intercontinental missiles, submarine launched missiles, thermonuclear warheads etc. It remains for KS to explain how this can be done under conditions of nuclear ambiguity, which at most permit the acquisition of a small arsenal.

Similar considerations apply in the case of China as a perceived adversary. Nuclear deterrent via-a-vis China, taking into consideration the location of retaliatory targets, the size of China's nuclear arsenal etc. also lead to requirements which cannot be met by a posture of nuclear ambiguity.

Finally, there is Pakistan. In this case, nuclear ambiguity can perhaps provide a credible deterrent, in the context of a corresponding posture on Pakistan's part. But it is important to emphasise here that there are other options to nuclear ambiguity on both sides which may be preferable from the standpoint of national security. There is also the option of excluding nuclear weapons from the subcontinent which must be considered in this context. In this eventuality, the question of a nuclear deterrent via-a-vis Pakistan would not arise, since the latter would be precluded from acquiring nuclear weapons by such a development.

As far as India and Pakistan are concerned, the acquisition of nuclear weapons by both sides can only lead to the deterioration of the national security of both sides. Nuclear ambiguity on both sides is likely to lead to such an undesirable situation. The option of excluding nuclear weapons from the sub-continent and its vicinity is thus preferable from the standpoint of national security.

The Pakistan proposals for a nuclear weapons free zone in South Asi are lacking in that they do not exclude the U.S. bases, naval facilities an Rapid Deployment Force facilities. But this does not mean that our govern ment should merely reject it, without making a counter proposal for genuine nuclear weapons free zone which also excludes the U.S. nuclea weapons infrastructure in the sub-continent and its vicinity.

Let us briefly examine another line of KS' arguments in favour o nuclear ambiguity : By maintaining nuclear ambiguity, pressure is put on th nuclear weapon powers to disarm. One acquires, or threatens to acquir nuclear weaponry, in order to compel disarmament by existing nuclea powers. How valid is this reasoning? One notes that arguments of this variet have been put forward time and again by the Americans. The recent test of a anti-satellite weapon was justified by the Reagan administration on just thes grounds : to force the Soviets to negotiate in good faith. Earlier, the introduc tion of MIRV (multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles) by th U.S. was also justified with similar arguments. The only practical outcome o arguments of this variety has been to advance the arms race one step further Just as vertical proliferation cannot curb horizontal proliferation, is it an more likely that horizontal proliferation can curb vertical proliferation? Th fallacy of the above argument arises in its neglect of some obvious politica realities. It assumes that disarmament can take place by "putting pressure o the nuclear powers" without first bringing about some political changes i those countries. Such an illusion is quickly dispelled by looking at the histor of the nuclear arms race with open eyes.

Every single step forward in the nuclear arms race has been taken by on side. From atom bomb to hydrogen bomb, the SLBM to MIRV to cruise mis siles, neutron weapons and now Star Wars, each escalation has been initiate by the USA. At every new step, American mass media have cooperated wit the weapons establishment in propagating justifications that have later pro ved to have been lies.

In 1976, the Committee For The Present Danger was formed in the USA with the explicit purpose of stalling arms control agruments. This Commit tee is composed of the highest and most powerful members of US industry mass media, academic establishment and military establishment. It could b considered as the purest crystallisation of various interests representing th American Right Wing. Today, members of the Committee For The Presen Danger occupy every important position in the nuclear establishment of th USA. The President of the USA, Ronald Reagan, is himself, member o this Committee.

The topmost decision makers on nuclear weapons policy in the USA ar people who are closely linked with the corporations manufacturing thes weapons and their components. Disarmament is bad business, if not ban kruptcy for these corporations. It is not an exaggeration or oversimplificatio to state that such an establishment is only looking for more reasons t manufacture more weapons. What happens to the 'nuclear weapons to com pel disarmament' argument in this concrete context? Is it not more likely tha

these nuclear weapons will provide another excuse for yet another defence contract to the American war industry?

In fact, it is extremely difficult to visualise any progress in disarmament unless there is a change of government in the West, particularly in the USA, but also in Europe. Unless the people of the Western countries elect governments which are willing to disarm, it may be futile to harbour hopes of disarmament. Subrahmanyam makes the valid observation that "The battle against nuclear proliferation has to be won in the hearts and minds of the people of the industrial world." However, it is unfortunate that he does not make a serious analysis of how to fight this battle.

During the past 4 or 5 years, there has been another kind of proliferation which is of great importance to the problem of nuclear weapons and disarmament. This has been the proliferation of the peace forces in various countries of the world. No discussion of nuclear proliferation and nuclear disarmament today can ignore this extremely important political factor.

The developments in West Germany are an example of this process. In 1979, when the SDP was in power, the decision was taken to introduce the Pershing 2 missiles into West Germany. During the subsequent years, there has been a major shift within the SDP, with more than 80% of its representatives voting against the introduction of the Pershing 2 missiles. The support for the U.S. missiles in Europe today can be generally idenfitied with the Right, and Centre-Right parties. The Social Democrats in W. Germany and Britain are increasingly taking positions which are quite favourable to disarmament. A similar polarization is taking place in other western countries. Even in the USA, there is considerable support for concrete proposals like the Test Ban, a nuclear freeze, and for the non-first use declaration.

The growth of peace forces has not yet prevented the Rightwing governments of Thatcher, Kohl and Reagan from pushing ahead with rearmament on a big scale. Recently, even the Dutch government has fallen in line with the USA on the question of Euromissiles, against the wishes of the majority of its people. But there have also been important developments in the other direction. We have the example of the Lange government in New Zealand banning the use of its ports by U.S. ships and submarines carrying nuclear weapons. The Papandreou government in Greece has asked the U.S. to remove its bases from Greek soil.

Within the U.S.A. itself, the Senate recently voted for a three month moratorium on nuclear testing. This was before the Gorbachev offer of a complete moratorium on nuclear tests. During the next few months one can visualise a very interestng battle within the U.S. on the question of the test moratorium. Even traditionally conservative sections like the U.S. conference of Catholic Bishops have come out in support of the test ban as also of the 'non first use' clause and nuclear freeze.

In the United Nations, there is a solid consensus on a number of propositions which can provide a sound basis for beginning the process of nuclear disarmament. Except for the NATO countries, and on some ques-

tions except for the USA, the following propositions have been carried by big majorities in the U.N. General Assembly:

1. That the nuclear powers give declarations of 'non first use' of nuclear weapons. (This would immediately permit the disarmament of tactical nuclear weapons and substantially raise the nuclear threshold).

2. A comprehensive test ban. (This would arrest developments of new kinds of warheads and the X-ray lasers for the Star Wars programme.)

3. The establishment of nuclear-weapons-free-zones in various parts of the world, especially in Europe.

4. A freeze on quantitative and qualitative developments in nuclear armaments.

5. An immediate stop to the Star Wars initiative.

With the Soviet Union having expressed its support for these propositions, the prime task (becomes) is to compel the American government to accept these positions. As has been aruged earlier, this would probably require the defeat of the Reagan government in the next U.S. elections and the election of a government favourable to arms control and disarmament. *Thus the task of disarmament becomes a political task of forging a broad alliance of various diverse and sometimes even contradictory forces favouring disarmament within the NATO countries.*

Before we proceed further with the argument, it is worth reiterating some of the earlier arguments in point form: 1. Nuclear disarmament will require governmental and political changes in some of the NATO countries. 2. Today there has been a substantial growth of 'pro-disarmament' forces in these countries, as well as all over the world. However, Right-wing governments in power in important NATO countries are proceeding ahead with nuclear re-armament.

If we examine the results of various polls taken in Europe and the USA, we find that while there is majority support for many disarmament proposals, this has not resulted in the election of governments favouring disarmament, except in a few cases. This paradoxical situation requires detailed analysis. However, the facts indicate that the victory of Rightwing, anti-disarmament coalitions and parties in elections has been the result of disorganisation and lack of unity in the ranks of the pro-disarmament and anti-nuclear forces.

The possibility, therefore, exists of building as a conscious and long-term strategy, a broad coalition of pro-disarmament forces in various parts of the world, especially in the NATO countries. Such coalitions, if they can resist divison at the time of parliamentary or presidential elections on other issues, can defeat the Rightwing, militarist trend now in power in the USA and many NATO countries.

We may term the use of disarmament and peace forces for bringing about political changes as 'Excercising the Disarmament Option'. If we contemplate and thoroughly digest the implications of the preceding analysis, it

emerges that there is a powerful and effective strategy available to this country which does not require us to rely on the nuclear option.

Nuclear blackmail can be defeated by subverting the aims that nuclear blackmail intends to accomplish. American nuclear weapons are intended to ensure for the Americans untrammelled interference in the affairs of Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa. American nuclear strategy in recent years has been to bind its allies more tighlty in the web of its nuclear establishment. For example, the introduction of the Pershing 2 missiles in West Germany is intended to bind more tightly the fate of West Germany with that of America. This was done partly to counter the strengthening pressures on many West European governments to opt out of the NATO alliance.

The most effective strategy to fight nuclear blackmail is to launch a political counter-attack in a strategy to strengthen the forces of independence and democracy, whether in Europe, the USA or in the Third World. America's military might should not divert attention from its growing political vulnerability internationally. (This vulnerability has a very deep foundation in the economic crisis brewing in the West, with the economic bankruptcy threatening the USA and Britain, which we cannot discuss within the scope of this article). It is this political vulnerability that can be utilised far more effectively as a strategy to defeat nuclear blackmail and compel disarmament, provided the strategy is conducted purposefully, systematically and consistently over a period of several years.

The organisation of a broad political alliance of disarmament forces is unlikely to take place spontaneously. It will require the active intervention of a leadership which must necessarily have great credibility in the eyes of a broad spectrum of the pro-disarmament sections. This leadership will have to intervene not only in international forums like the U.N. but also take an active interest in the internal politics of the nuclear war-mongering NATO states.

Our country is extremely well placed to play a vanguard role in this international strategy to subvert the war aims of the USA by strengthening and consolidating the peace forces throughout the world. But to be able to play this leadership role, our government will have to establish its unquestioned credibility as a disarmament force in the eyes of the world's peace forces. Today it is possible for disarmament pressures to play an equal if not a more important role than nuclear pressures.

We believe there is no single step which will confer on our government a greater credibility in the eyes of the peace forces than proposing and arriving at an agreement with the countries of the subcontinent, especially Pakisan, to exclude nuclear weapons from the subcontinent and its vicinity. Of course, such a proposal must be consistent with the demands of national security. The proposal must not only preclude the manufacture of nuclear weapons infrastructure like RDF bases and naval facilities of the nuclear powers. The proposal for a nuclear weapons free zone made by Pakistan is seriously lacking in that it does not exclude the nuclear weapons infrastructre of foreign

powers. But instead of merely rejecting that proposal, our government should respond with a stronger proposal.

Such a development would be the first instance of a nation, which has the technical capacity to manufacture nuclear weapons, voluntarily and unambiguously adjuring its nuclear option. It would add to India's international stature and yield to it the position of a world leader of a new trend in world politics, the trend of disarmament.

In conjuction with such a proposal or agreement, our government must actively intervene in the European arena, using all the media and means at its disposal to reach the peoples of Europe. Such an intervention could make a difference to the political outcomes of several elections in coming years. In particular, it would then become eminently possible to build up mass political support and ultimately governmental support for a nuclear weapons free zone in Europe. Since the Soviet Union has already indicated its acceptance for such a proposal, the task is already half achieved.

The year 1986 is the United Nations International Year of Peace. It is likely to be a crucial year for the cause of disarmament. The times and circumstances appear to be ripe for radical initiatives in this area.

Summarising the preceding argument, it appears that if the choice is between a non-credible nuclear deterrent provided by a policy of nuclear ambiguity, and enhanced disarmament credibility provided by a policy of unambiguous disarmament, the latter is politically preferable. The choice is one of lagging and trailing in the footsteps of the nuclear powers playing an increasingly discredited and devalued game of nuclear diplomacy or breaking new ground as a leader of a new world trend.

Exercising the Disarmament Option is a fighting strategy. Instead of taking a defensive position on your own territory, it involves taking the struggle into the territory of the adversary after strengthening our hands in our own part of the world. This is not the place to discuss the detailed tactics which emerge from this strategy. What we are arguing for here is its political necessity and feasibility in the present world situation.

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(This article is a modified version of a talk given at a seminar on 'India's Nuclear Policy Options' organised by the Group for Nuclear Disarmament (GROUND) in Bombay on September 22, 1985.)

Simone de Beauvoir : In Search of Freedom and Honesty

FEW LITERARY women of this century can have excited as much attention, admiration and controversy as Simone de Beauvoir. She was one of the philosophical leaders of the French existentialist movement, and extended its insights to incorporate the unique social position of women. De Beauvoir's prominence in the French left movement, her own major literary contributions and her close, life-long association with Jean-Paul Sartre, made her an object of extreme interest to women and leftists throughout the world.

Rarely has any life been chronicled in such detail by the subject herself. Four volumes of autobiography, along with the recent memoir of the dying years of Sartre, provide a rich compendium of her situation in changing times. Recurrent themes are the quest for truth and the need for their relentless revelation of personal ambiguities, but also for their description of the social and moral difficulties of leftist intellectuals—epitomized by herself and Sartre—seeking to submerge themselves in a larger cause and movement, yet held back by the need to assert and maintain individual moral positions. The *Mandarins*—arguably her finest and most complex novel—develops this predicament of post-war French leftists in terms of the contending interplay of personalities reflecting the moral, ideological and 'human' (emotional) positions. The ideal that emerges in all these writings is one of people working closely with others against oppression, while maintaining absolute equality, separateness and respect for each other's freedom.

From the start of the Second World War, the story of de Beauvoir's life is one of increasing politicisation and active involvement with the major social movements of her time. *Les Temps Modernes*, a post war journal, which, for many years, she edited with Sartre as part of a collective, was known for its anti-imperialist stance. It was critical of overt racism in the U.S. and incipient racism in France, as well as of imperialist foreign policies which threatened liberation movements in the Third World. In the 1950s, she and Sartre were active in their support of the Algerian freedom struggle. The Algerian war isolated those progressive intellectuals and workers who deplored the French colonial rule from other groups in French society. This loss of a "common cause" with other segments of French people (in contrast to the period of

Resistance) forced them to define their radical stance clearly and drove them into active political participation. In this period, de Beauvoir was a major campaigner for various anti-colonial and progressive causes, participating in demonstrations, signature campaigns and attempts to publicize and condemn the activities of French and other imperialisms. She was sickened by the callous and inhuman atrocities committed by the colonialists, and haunted by the complicity that inaction or silence implied *Djamila Bonpacha* (1962), a collaborative book with the Algerian lawyer Gisele Halimi, is a searing account of the case of an Algerian woman who was tortured.

Earlier too, de Beauvoir had shown herself sensitive to the plight of people in developing countries attempting to break out of their own forms of oppression. This is evident in *The Long March* (1957), based on a visit to China, and other writings. In 1968, she and Sartre joined French workers and students in the uprising which rebelled against the stolidity and reification of oppression which characterized social relations in capitalist France. She made several trips to the Soviet Union in these years : admiring the material gains and economic support for equality, but critical of the suppression of intellectual freedom and tendency to centralisation.

It is clear that de Beauvoir saw political activity as a means of establishing a creative 'We' and escaping from the sterility of the solitary 'I'. In *Force of Circumstance* (1963), her third volume of memoirs, she described her feelings on attending a demonstration in Paris during a time of personal despondency and bleakness : "Solitude is a form of death, and as I felt the warmest of human contact flow through me again, I came back to life."

Posterity may find that de Beauvoir's work on women was her greatest contribution. *The Second Sex* (1949) is a tour de force in every conceivable way. This remarkable book. rich in theory and replete with historical detail, derives its strength from describing and criticising the social, economic and psychological mechanisms of women's oppression. Extraordinarily, it was written in relative isolation from other women : in the socio-political absence of a developed women's movement, and in the personal absence of close women friends with whom she could develop her views. Yet it was the first, and remains the only work on the female condition which posits an explanation for women's oppression while seeing women as subjects who have the power to liberate themselves. De Beauvoir developed the concept of woman as the 'other' as do blacks in a white-dominated society or the proletariat in a capitalist society; but the bond that unites women to their oppressors is obviously not comparable to any other "Women are not born but made", and this making condemns them to lives of "immanence" and basic reproduction rather than "transcendence" through creativity.

Despite its analytical force and scholarship the book is not without its flaws and extremities of judgements. De Beauvoir's analysis was heavily idealist; later she admitted that if she were to rewrite *The Second Sex*, she would give her notion of women's oppression a stronger material grounding "Otherness is not simply an idealistic relationship.....it is a power relationship, based also on scarcity." In *the Long March*, she elaborated on this

by dwelling on the historical and material underpinnings defining female social roles in China.

In a later work, *Old Age* (1970), de Beauvoir showed a similar empathy, erudition and creativity in addressing the problems of aging in a society obsessed with youth and eternal material life, and haunted by the fear of death. Her important social and psychological insights in this area have probably not yet been fully understood. Perhaps, like *the Second Sex*, *Old Age* has anticipated future concerns, and a work produced by de Beauvoir in relative isolation will find its expression in collective consciousness later.

In her novels, de Beauvoir explored—with sensitivity and often devastatingly painful clarity—the moral dilemmas and emotional needs that create or prevent human happiness. *She Came to Stay* (1943) and *The Mandarins* (1945) are clearly autobiographically inspired, and highlight the difficulties of coming to terms with a conscious and continuous choice of 'individual freedom', with the demands that it poses on oneself and others. But de Beauvoir could also be perceptive of other situations. In *The Blood of Others* (1948), *Les Belles Images* (1966) and *The Woman Destroyed* (1967), she dealt sensitively with deep problems of loss of security, of identity, of love and emotional support—and the complex means of coping with such loss. Her prose was rough-hewn, basic and spontaneous rather than elegant, and this adds a sense of urgency to the search for honesty which characterised all her work.

The roots of this search have been best described by de Beauvoir herself in *All Said And Done* (1972):

"My natural bent certainly does not lead me to suppose that the worst is inevitable. Yet I am committed to looking reality in the face and speaking of it without pretence : and who dares to say that it is a pleasant sight ?....To fight unhappiness one must first expose it, which means that one dispel the mystifications behind which it is hidden so that people do not have to think about it. It is because I reject lies and running away that I am accused of pessimism; but this rejection implies hopes—the hope that the truth my be of use. And this is a more optimistic attitude than the choice of indifference, ignorance or sham."

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BOOK REVIEW

PAUL CHILTON (ed.) LANGUAGE AND THE NUCLEAR ARMS DEBATE : NUKESPEAK TODAY, London. Frances Pinter, 1985.

IN A newspaper article discussing the capability of the Tomahawk land attack missile, the reporter wrote that, "it would disable an airbase for a significant period." The unwary reader would hardly suspect that a nuclear armed Tomahawk missiles carries war heads in the 200-250 kiloton range. The Hiroshima bomb was a mere 12.5 kilotons and it killed 140,000 people (1945 figures) and reduced an area of 13 sq. km. to ashes. Therefore, to call the capacity of such a missile 'disabling' is a gross deception. The existence of growing arsenal of weapons which can annihilate the world many times over has, ironically, come to be seen as necessary and this has, among other things, affected the way we talk and think about them. On the one hand, their capacity for destruction is sought to be attenuated in language. On the other hand, we tend to speak of the weapons in non-nuclear terms. So a missile is named after a bird or a god and a nuclear attack against civilian targets is called 'countervalue'. As power is unevenly distributed in society, so the power to communicate and our perspectives vary with our position. In the nuclear discourse, the voice of the victims is excluded. Language is a form of power, and through a whole range of techniques, through syntax and vocabulary, through metaphors and euphemisms, reality is obfuscated in certain ways to ensure the hegemony of the ruling discourse.

We need a counter reading or critical reading to clear away the obfuscations and among the many techniques available, is linguistic analysis. Paul Chilton's book offers twelve essays which are concerned with "Nukespeak", the language used in the nuclear arms debate. Just as the purpose of Newspeak was "not only to provide a medium of expression for the world view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, but to make all other modes of thought impossible", so, in a similar manner, the language of nuclear discourse seeks legitimacy for the 'defense of the undefensible'. That it is not restricted to political speech is well brought about by the essay which examines humour in the nuclear debate. The book is divided into four parts and the essays cover a wide range of topics anaylsing the language used against peace groups, the rhetoric of deterrence, the way the media covers nuclear issues and theoretical issues raised by linguistic anaylsis.

The argument of the book is premised on the understanding that, a) samples of text indicate ideologically structured meanings and b) that the language resource itself is conceivably ideologically affected. The contributors do not accept that there is a "semiotic free market in which all interests have opportunities leading to a natural equilibrium.' (p. xx) The overemphasis on forms of language as opposed to meanings, notably in the structural analysis of lanaguage, has been questioned by those who, like Harold Garfinkel, seek to include the relation between linguistic and non-

linguistic and consider how language serves as a medium of power and control. Linguistic activity is a social activity and the position of the writer is not priviliged–the reader (consumer) is in a position to resist. By 'resistant readings' it is possible to reconstruct the reality obfuscated by the hegemonic discourse. Traditional linguistic concerns revolve around phonological and syntactic structures, but discourse analysis takes the actual organization of naturally occuring expressions and deals with the flow of conversation.

A discourse, if it is successful, makes the social into the natural and allows no room for argument. However, while producers of texts can marshall discourse into certain configuration, readers are in a position to reconstruct their own meanings. It is this emphasis on the important and active role of the reader which offers a way out of sterile linguistic debates and a methodology for understanding how ideas are planted in the head. The contributors are, however, clear that this is not the whole story and underline that, "it remains an important task to examine the social and political processes by which 'planting' can be done in the first place."

The models and concepts developed to analyse ruling ideologies is employed in a number of case studies. Kress writes on the media's attitude arguing that, "All texts are constructed around a basic anti-Soviet attitude which maybe more or less present in the texts, or constructed by its absence." To give an example, the *Daily Mail* reporting on the protest at Greenham Common against the stationing of American cruise missiles stated, "But it was not only a triumph for the peace movement it was a coup for the Soviet propaganda machine."

The anti-Soviet bias is related to the doctrine of deterrence, which is propogated as if it were an objective scientific description, but is in fact a 'teaching or a dogma with ideological, physiological and cultural underpinnings.' (p. xix)

Deterrence is a key concept in the nuclear strategic debate and its importance is underlined by the fact that one section deals with the issue. Bell and Claes use the semiotic theory of Greimas and the phychoanalytical concepts of J. Lacan to examine the logic of official NATO defence policy. Their understanding that there is a "mirror relationship" between the USA and the USSR ends on a note which equates the two. Thus they write that, "Both parties take the same position with regard to each other. And they have the same perception of each other : we arm because they do so; we will attack (defend ourselves offensively) if they attack us; we will stop armament if they disarm first etc." Such a view fails to see how the relationship between the two powers developed after World War II.

The fundamental fact to bear in mind when considering the rivalry of the two powers is that the USA emerged from the war with its strength intact and during the 1950's it enjoyed a position of overwhelming superiority. Not only was its arsenal bigger but it could deliver it to the USSR, while the USSR did not have the capability to attack the USA. The protection which the USA enjoyed because of its geographical location enabled the doctrine of deterrence to be used effectively.

Deterrence, grounded in the belief that a power must clearly indicate to

an opponent that the costs of action far outweigh any benefits it may derive, is fundamentally unsound and its contradictions have led directly to the escalation of the arms race. While it is not necessary to follow the evolution and development of this doctrine through McNamara's strategy of a mix of deterrence and limited war, it is worth remembering that it was during the liberal Kennedy government that there was a massive build-up and that over the years a nuclear war became, not something to prevent, but a war which in Alexander Haig's famous statement, was winnable. Statements of this type are not merely the random ravings of mindless individuals but are part of the climate of ideas which support and allow expression to such thinking. They are part of the growing militarization of our world.

Paul Chilton's more technical analysis of the use and history of the meaning of deter, deterrent and deterrance is a detailed investigation of the word deter to argue that it is a 'trigger' for a set of meanings about cold war relations. He shows how 'morphism' can be built on the basis of a shared and known frame of reference and how political power is used to influence the information media.

To return to the earlier point that it is not just a question of some hawks espousing agressive doctrines, Peter Moss shows by analysing a speech of Ronald Reagan and tabloids brought out by the Department of Defense and their annual reports, that there is a "strongly revised cultural primitiveness used in the service of military and political policies." (p. 46) His conclusions are that abstract virtues, like duty, honour and obligation, underpin the rhetoric of defense and this conflating of military and cultural values has led to the militarization of national perceptions and such a world view has to be countered by "imposing alternative words on the general consciousness." (p. 63)

Specialization has, because of a growing complex vocabulary, cut off researchers from other fields and particularly in the field of linguistic analysis, the purposeful obscurity pursued by some of its most distinguished practioners (Lacan being a good example) has made much fine work inaccessible to many and difficult to evaluate for the non-specialist. The argument that clarity is a virtue appropriate to the discourse of persuasion and autocracy does not make for easier reading.

The virtue of Chilton's book is that by explaining the concepts used in linguistic analysis, to those who might be unfamiliar with them, and by applying them to the study of a concrete problem,—the nuclear arms debate—it offers a view not only of the specific forms in which an ideology for an atomic war is being naturalized, but also how these pervasive modes of thought can be countered. As Steiner in the concluding essay writes, "if we do not use all the available knowledge in the interests of liberty, oppressive institutions are likely to use it in the interests of restriction." (p. 228). It is this vision which provides a method to re-instate the voice of the victims that makes this a book of wide interest.

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Chicago May 1, 1986. A workers' strike for an eight hour working day became a revolution that created history. A history written in the sweat of toiling men the world over. A history of an international workers' solidarity. Today, the Left Front Government salutes all persevering mortals. Let us raise our voice and echo the words of Karl Marx: 'Working Men of All Countries Unite'.

— Government of West Bengal

The Left Front Govt's tribute to a hundred years of struggle.

Editorial Note

THE CHANGES that have taken place in the agricultural sector in India over the last decade or so cannot but be of profound interest to students of development problems. In the pre-war years over which the shadow of the Great Depression had loomed large, the notion of agrarian crisis was closely bound up with declining terms of trade for the peasantry and all its attendant consequences : pauperisation, growing debt, increasing burden of usury, etc. In the fifties and the early sixties, by contrast, much of the radical academic literature that emerged was marked by a perception of a very different kind : capitalistic industrialisation which was being assiduously promoted through active state intervention was seen as being constrained by fetters upon agricultural output-growth arising from the pervasive existence of pre-capitalist relationships in the coutryside. This, it was argued, would give rise to inflationary tilt to the terms of trade in favour of agriculture, and lead to an impoverishment not of the peasantry as a whole, but of that section of the peasantry and agricultural labourers, apart from the urban working class, whose incomes do not keep pace with the rise in prices. A very clear exposition of this view was provided by Michel Kalecki who remarked : "the problem of mobilising adequate resources for economic development is nothing else but the problem of raising agricultural output".

The nature of agrarian crisis was correspondingly perceived differently : it was not a crisis affecting pre-capitalist producers as a whole who are tied to a world market that pushes the burden of depression on to their shoulders; it was a crisis faced by large sections of pre-capitalist producers who are impoverished by inflation and evicted from land by a growing capitalist tendency within agriculture itself that seeks to take advantage of the profitable opportunities opened up under the regime of "planed development".

Over the last decade or so, however, an altogether new experience has been upon us. Starting since 1975, the terms of trade have moved against the agricultural sector; the decline in terms of trade to date has been of the order of 15 per cent according to official data. This has brought forth widespread peasant actions, led no doubt by the landlords and the rich peasantry, but involving the participation of large sections of the middle and even poor peasantry. Over the last couple of years in particular there have been sharp declines in prices of a number of commercial crops and also a huge accumulation of stocks of foodgrains. Partly no doubt this latest phenomenon reflects cyclical over-production. But its insertion into a broader context of a decade-long decline in the terms of trade for agriculture, and the fact that this longer-term decline is itself not a phenomenon confined only to India but paralleled by the decline in primary commodity prices all

over the world since the mid-seventies, suggests that we are in an altogether new phase where the contours of the agrarian crisis have an altogether different shape. And this new phase is going to stay with us awhile. With the world capitalist economy showing no signs of shaking off the protracted stagnation into which it has sunk since the mid-seventies, primary commodity prices are going to remain depressed in the foreseable future, which is bound to have its impact upon the Indian scene as well. What is more, the Indian economy, unlike say the Latin American economies, has until now escaped the specific rigours of the world capitalist crisis in terms of a synchronous downturn in growth-rates, and this situation may be changing what with the worsening of the payments crisis; international lenders are bound to impose on the country deflationary measures to the detriment *inter alia* of the peasantry.

The necessity for studying this new phase can hardly be overemphasised. The shape of class-conflicts it unleashes, the nature of class-alignments it portends; all these have a vital bearing upon the development of our economy and policy. *Social Scientist* would like to publish in the coming numbers a series of articles upon the agrarian question as it stands today. For a start, we publisha brief piece by Venkatesh Athreya and associates which is part of a much wider empirical study they have done about class—differentiation within the peasantry in a specific region.

Social Scientist has always been interested in publishing pieces which recapture the history of the strugle of the working people in the country. The piece by Siddhartha Guha Ray which recounts the struggles of the Calcutta tramways workers during the decade of the twenties belongs to this *genre*.

The article by Atul Sarma and V.B. Tulsidhar is not only an empirical exercise for determining the "safe limit" to deficit financing, the interesting on that score itself as a methodological excerise, but also an exposition providing insights into the structure of the economy. Finally, we publish C.P Geevan's piece on the Challenger tragedy, which holds important lessons for all thinking persons on the question of the interaction between science and society in the contemporary era.

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Production Relations and Agrarian Change

Some Findings from a Case Study in Tamil Nadu

IN THE LIVELY debate on the mode of production in Indian agriculture conducted mainly in the pages of *Economic and Political Weekly* and *Social Scientist* in the late' sixties and early' seventies, some important issues concerning the impact of production relations in agriculture came to the fore[1]. Among them were the rȯle of landlordism and usury as obstacles to development, and the changes in agrarian class structure brought about (and in the offing) since Independence[2]. In the present paper, we briefly report some findings from a case study set in Tamil Nadu which have a bearing on these issues.

We proceed as follows. In the following section, we provide a brief description of the study area and the methods we have used to collect the material. We then present a summary picture of the relations of production and of agrarian class structure as it emerges from our exercise in classification that we have reported in detail elsewhere (Athreya et al 1983). Finally we turn to the bearing that our findings may have on some issues raised in the ongoing debate on agrarian development in India[3].

The Field Area and Methods Used

This study is set in Kulithalei and Manaparei Panchavat Union, in Tiruchy District in Tamil Nadu, South India. In this area we find a microscopic representation of the major ecological types in Tamil Nadu agriculture.

This geographically small area contains two very different agrarian ecotypes which we call the *wet* and the *dry* area, corresponding to what Baker [1984], after Ludden [1978 a and b], calls the *valleys* and the *plains*, two major divisions in Tamil Nadu's social ecology. The wet area refers to a belt stretching along the river Kaveri, where a canal system benefits the alluvial lands. The densely populated villages are cool and shady, situated along the canals,

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and surrounded by orchard of coconut trees. Between the villages are paddy fields, cane and banana plantations, green throughout the year thanks to a generous supply of water. But the irrigated belt is quite narrow; a few miles away from the river the lush green is replaced by the red sandy soils of the rainfed tracts, where vegetation is much more sparse. Here cultivation is, to a large extent, carried out on rainfed lands, which can support only millets or sorghum, sometimes intercropped with pulses.

The main empirical material consists of a detailed *farm and household economic survey* of 367 households in three "wet" and three "dry" villages. The villages were chosen from among 65 administratively defined "villages" with probability proportional to size 'so-called PPS-sampling, see Cochran [1977]. Within each village we took a simple random sample from 99 per cent of the agrarian population (the main sample), and then we did a census of the remaining 1 per cent, the richest households in each village (what we call the UPC, or the upper percentile). In this way, the very skewed distribution of many key variables (like land and wealth) would be covered through over-representation of the tail-enders.

An extensive interview was made with each household selected. It covered the main aspects of the asset-structure and their farm economy for an entire crop-year—the year ending with the current season. Data collection lasted from November 1979 to May 1980

Adequate coverage of land tenure was secured by extensive preparatory investigation—in principle we knew the extent of land owned and cultivated by the household *before* the interview. The investigators were thoroughly coached in farm economy, and were taught to look out for and probe into inconsistencies, evasions, underestimates, etc.—sometimes by collecting information from neighbours and other informants. The inverviews were analyzed in the field by totalling up farm budgets, and by making a preliminary classification. All this, plus the considerable effort put down in creating rapport by explaining the purpose of the study to the respondents, has improved the quality of the data.

The heart of the interview was the *farm-operations form* in which, for all the crops cultivated on a farm, all operations were taken down, with details on inputs used, labour expended, and cash spent. From these data, a three-fold account can be built up, covering (1) inputs and output in material terms, (2) labour used specified by type (family, exchange, hired), and (3) cash flows (costs of inputs, income from marketing).

The resulting structure of the material enables us to work, not only with a conventional farm account (primarily in money terms), but also with other types of accounting, counting e.g. in labour days, or in kind terms (kgs of paddy for instance).

Relations of Production and Class Structure

We have used the material from the farm and household economic study to assign each household to a specific class category based on the criterion of surplus appropriation. We shall not enter upon a detailed

explanation of this criterion here (see Athreya et al, op. cit.) A summary version of the classification scheme is presented in Table 1:

Table 1

Description of Classes

Class Category	Description
Agricultural Labour Households[1]	Not operating land Obtaining livelihood from agricultural labour
Poor Peasant Households	Operating land Farm income insufficient to cover household grain consumption requirements
Middle Peasant Households	Operating land Farm income is sufficient to meet grain requirements of the household, but insufficient to meet one or more of the following 1) Non-grain consumption requirements, 2) Cash cost of reproduction of the farm, or 3) Cash cost to replace family labour with hired labour
Surplus Appropriating households (includes rich peasants, capitalist farmers and cultivating landlords)	Farm income more than sufficient to cover all consumption requirements, farm reproduction requirements and the replacement value of family labour (imputed at ruling wage rates)

The classification is based on the positing of a hierarchy of reproduction levels : grain requirements, cash costs of reproduction of farm, and non-grain consumption requirements. Kind costs have been netted out in the accounting we used. The ordering of reproduction levels is theoretically sowewhat arbitrary, but is based on the situation obtaining in the field, where most of the poor and middle peasants are grain producers.

For the sake of simplification, rich peasants and landlords (capitalist and others) have been lumped together. We have, elsewhere, made a more detailed classification of these categories (see Athreya et el, op. cit.).

Bases on this description of classes, let us now turn to the picture of the class structures in the two areas of study.

The canal-irrigated belt on the south of the Kaveri has a fertile alluvial-black soil complex and an eminent system of irrigation, receiving water for 10-11 months a year. This makes it possible to cultivate three paddy crops a year, or two crops of paddy and a third crop of sesame or black gram. Paddy covers nearly 2/3 of the gross cultivated area, and more than half the paddy area under high-yielding varieties. (See table 2 below.) Almost year-round area under high-yielding varieties. (See table 2) Almost year-round banana and sugarcane.

In terms of social structure, the wet area can be seen as part of the Thanjavur delta, as it once had the same structure of Brahmin-dominated landlordism described by Gough [1981]. But the old system of share-cropping has been partially displaced. The area had a lively tenant's movement in the 50s which, before it collapsed, succeeded in giving some life to the Land Reform

Table II

Gross Cultivated Area Broken Down by Ecotype and Crop (per cent)

Crop	Ecotype	
	Wet area (per cent)	Dry area (per cent
Paddy, traditional and improved varieties	28	5
Paddy, high-yielding varieties	34	19
Sugar-cane	8	—
Bananas	20	—
Solam	—	16
Solam, Intercropped	2	16
Cumbu	—	13
Groundnut	—	7
Various crops	7	23
Total	99	99

Act. As a result, about half of all tenants pay legally regulated rents. In the unregulated lease-markets, share-croppers of the traditional type nowadays are interspersed with capitalist tenants. Handsome rates of return, especially in banana cultivation, enable capitalist farmers to compete with the poor sharecroppers.

But many of the old landlords have also opted out of agriculture; under the threat of land-reform they have sold their lands to farmers who manage their own cultivation. Roughly half of all land is owner-cultivated. Farm sizes vary from small parcels where poor peasants grow paddy for own consumption, to big estates entirely relying upon wage-labour.

The class structure of the wet area is very polarized. At the base of the social pyramid we have a landless proletariat, making up 30 per cent of the agrarian population. (See table 3). Another 19 per cent are poor peasants. They cultivate own or leased-in land, but on such a small scale that they have to rely on labouring out as a primary source of income. These two groups together make up what we call the rural proletariat which consists, then, of nearly half the agrarian population.

The middle peasantry constitutes 21 per cent of the agrarian population. The majority among them are victims of a "simple reproduction squeeze" : they are unable to subsist on their farming and have to rely on supplementary sources of income, either as agriucltural labourers or outside agriculture, in trade, services, or industry. Only a minority are autonomously reproductive peasants who are in principle independent of non-farm sources of income, subsisting, thanks to their own labour and that of their family, on their own farm, but dependent nevertheless on the exploitation of hired labour.

Table III

Estimated class structure of wet and dry area
(per centage of agrarian population).

Class	Wet area	Dry area
Rural Proletariat :		
Agricultural Labourers	30	16
Poor peasants	19	28
Middle peasants	21	46
Rich peasants	6	2
Capitalist farmers	5	2
Cultivating landlords	2	0
Pure landlords	2	0
Others and unclassifiable	14	6
Total	99	100

The dry area covers the major part of the field area, but has only about half of its population, spread in smaller settlements. In contrast to the wet area which obtains water from the rain-rich mountains on the west coast, the dry area is entirely dependent on local rainfall, less than 1000 millimetres a year Evapotranspiration is high in this sub-tropical climate, and is exceeded by rainfall only in October-November with the North-East Monsoon. Some of the rain is collected in tanks, and is used for a single crop of paddy, but this system covers less than 10 per cent of the operated area. Wells cover a 44 per cent share of the operated area. They are dug both to supplement irrigation in tank-fed lands, and as an "independent" source of irrigation. The better wells, with powerful pumpsets permit double and occasionally even triple cropping.

The small tanks are not in general maintained properly. Damages to embankments and sluices are common. So is silting. Therefore the production potential of the tanks is not tapped, nor is their function as systems of drainage fulfilled, with soil erosion and flooding as some of the consequences. The background to this state of affairs is, on the one hand, the decline of local forms of cooperation which once made possible both the construction and the maintenance of these tanks. On the other hand, investments in well irrigation allow landowners to solve their problems of irrigation individually, thus mitigating the deleterious effects of the decline of the tanks for those who can acquire private means of irrigation. Thus they are less inclined to press for the maintenance of the tanks.

Before the introduction of pumpsets, water was drawn from shallow wells with the help of oxen (*kavalai*). The low productivity of this technology put a barrier to the expansion of this form of irrigation. One man working a full day with a pair of bullocks can hardly irrigate more than an acre or so.

their lands in order to pre-empt reform measures. The first process which has detrimental effects for the tenantry has often been noted, and it is clearly visible in our field material. The second process is less well-known and more important, since it makes it possible for new groups to acquire land, groups which are less conservative and more competent as cultivators. This mobility in the ownership structure explains why the traditional landlords have been reduced in numbers in our canal-irrigated area.

As long as one looks at the numerical size of the various classes, one can, however, get the erroneous impression that the transition to capitalist farming has virtually been completed in our area. If we look at the share of land controlled by the various class-fractions we get a corrective : pure landlords and cultivating landlords still control about 40 per cent of the operated area, and rich peasants and capitalist farmers control less than 20 per cent. The rich peasants and capitalist farmers are among those who have taken over land from the old landlord class. They represent an emerging force in Indian agriculture and rural society.

Reflecting on this partial replacement of landlordism, we would like to point out two important facts : (1) the State apparatus is important not only for the reproduction of the existing relations of production, but also for their transformation. But this conservative/transformative role of the State is very much the effect of (2) the class struggle. This point is also illustrated in our area. The partial displacement of landlordism which has occured is unthinkable without the communist-led tenants' movement which swept the area in the 50s. The direct effect of this movement was that some tenants managed to get their leaseholds registered with the courts at regulated rates of rent, so that today about half of the leased area is registered. But again the indirect effect was more important. Scared by land-reform, many landlords decided to avoid giving the land to the militant tenants, and sold out big chunks to willing buyers.

Usury

In the same manner as landlordism, usury has often been portrayed as a major obstacle to the transformation of Indian agriculture. This position is taken by Bhaduri (1973) who sees the combined force of landlordism and usury as the main obstacle to technological development in agriculture. A related position is taken by Banaji (1977) who sees a combined merchant/usurious capital as the primary relations of exploitation in Indian agriculture which has the effect of draining the surplus out of the sector.

Our study of usury (Athreya et al 1985a) is parallel to the one on landlordism in showing that the conservative effect of usury is overestimated in these theories. Usurious capital has been forced into at least a partial retreat as an effect of the expansion of credit institutions in the rural areas, and as an effect of the pumping of cheap credit into agriculture. This offensive has been an important vehicle for the spreading of high-yielding varieties, increased fertilizer and pesticide use, and the expansion of well-irrigation in the rainfed and tank-irrigated areas.

Here too, State intervention proves to be of strategic importance : the conservation/transformation of the production relations depends very much on the agrarian policies of the State.

But here the role of class struggle between the rural exploiters and the exploited, which was stressed above, is less evident, since the credit expansion has not been the result of pressure from below. On the contrary, the pressure has come from above, as is exemplified by the far-from-cooperative nature of the Credit Cooperatives. As pointed out [in Athreya et al, op. cit,] these cooperatives are quite old, but they were, to a large extent, defunct when they were revitalized by the injection of funds from the State. That part of their capital which is raised from the members is a mere fraction, however.

On the other hand, class struggle has been more decisive for the future role of institutional credit in agriculture. Massive default and non-recovery, even of interest has been an endemic problem of institutional credit, a problem which was aggravated with the so-called farmers' agitation which swept the area from 1978 to 1981. The methods of struggle adopted by this movement included non-payment of interest and instalment on institutional loans, electricity charges and land tax. The intensity of the movement made it obvious that almost all sections of the peasantry were affected by the issues raised.

But in order to fully understand this movement, one must go into the farm economy of various classes of farmers.

Reproductive Squeeze on the Middle Peasantry

Our evidence (reported in detail in Athreya et al, 1983) shows that only a minority of the middle peasantry in both the wet and the dry areas are autonomously reproductive, i.e. independent of non-farm source of income. This is symptomatic of the deep transformation that has in fact occurred in this agrarian economy. The middle peasants depend for their reproduction only partly on their own labour. Commodities have become a significant part both of farm reproduction and of consumption. To the extent that the middle peasantry cannot raise this cash through sale of farm produce, they are dependent on other sources of income. The ratio between farm prices and prices of inputs and consumer goods is obviously decisive for the degree to which the middle peasantry becomes dependent on non-farm income, and for the proportion of the middle peasantry who are autonomously reproductive. The fact that only a minority of middle peasants in our areas are autonomous in this sense is thus, at least partly, the result of an unfavourable price structure. It should be noted here that prices of farm inputs are administered prices fixed by the state. However, the picture with respect to the product market in agriculture is quite different and rather complicated. There is considerable segmentation in this market. The poorer producers, especially those who borrow for the purchase of inputs, on account of their economic situation and urgent need for cash, generally sell the produce at harvest at ruling post-harvest farm prices. These sections of the peasantry

face what is practically a buyer's market. Those who have a large surplus to sell—the landlords and capitalist farmers—are in a different category altogether. They can afford to wait and sell at favourable prices[5]. For those sections, the official procurement prices serve essentially as support prices in years of abundant harvest. In years of poor output, these sections manage to evade, at least in part, procurement at below market prices. The product market–also varies as between crops. There is an administered price structure for some of the commercial crops such as sugarcane, but markets for crops like banana and chillies are subject to sharp price fluctuations. Broadly, one could say that poor and middle peasants producing paddy (in wet and dry areas) and crops such as chillies and cotton (in the dry aeas) are placed precariously with respect to the product market. At the same time, there is significant state intervention in the product market, with the government fixing procurement prices for a number of crops like paddy and sugarcane.

On this point too, the crucial role of Sate intervention for the conservation/reproduction of the relations of production strikes the eye. The price relation becomes decisive for (1) the degree of autonomous reproduction of the middle peasantry, and (2) the size of the surplus of the upper class of farmers. The relations involves the middle and rich peasantry, and even the capitalist farmers in the same position *vis-a-vis* the State. Here we find an economic basis for an alliance between the middle peasants and the upper classes of farmers. The interesting potentiality here is for a crystallization of political contradictions, different from that exemplified by the tenants' movement discussed above, where the land-hungry sections of the peasantry were potentially allied. That is, in the tenants' movement, the middle peasants could be expected to ally with the poor and landless peasants could be expected to ally with the poor and landless peasants against the big landowners, while in the farmers' agitation, they allied with the big landowners *against* the State. This process, which we have so far only been able to study in outline, is important to an understanding of the development prospects in Indian agrarian society. At any rate, it shows that an alliance between the peasantry and the rural proletariat cannot obviously be assumed as an automatic consequence of the "new agricultural strategy"

Class Structure, Relations of Production and the State

Our study has forcefully brought home to us an aspect of the analysis of agrarian structure which has been relatively neglected in the mode of production debate : the role of the State in the determination of class structure and relations of production. In the two extreme stylised 'models' put forward in the debate—Bhaduri's model of semi-feudalism [Bhaduri 1973], and Banaji's model of merchant capital domination [Banaji 1977]—there was no room for the State. This was not surprising, since the question had been posed as one of the 'mode of production in agriculture'. In the context of the Indian agrarian economy since Independence, this was obviously incomplete, given the major role of the State in the attempt to promote capitalist development. What our material brings out is that the intervention of the

State—through agrarian reform legislations, massive pumping of credit, provision of subsidised irrigation and procurement and price policies—has been extremely important in strengthening commoditization, developing productive forces and promoting capitalist relations of production. Our material also shows that, while as a consequence of both State intervention and class struggle, the obstacles posed by landlordism and usury have been partially overcome in the study area, the process is both fragile and not without its contradictions.[6] The fragility of the process is especially evident in the sphere of credit where large sections of the peasantry faced with a crisis brought about by sharply increased relative prices of manufactured inputs and crop failures, lent their support to the "farmers's agitation" demanding moratorium on debt and distraint proceedings, and higher prices for produce. Similarly, while in our wet area where class strugles as well as State-initiated land reforms have led to the considerable strengthening of owner cultivation and of tenants in relation to the landlords, the latter still control two fifths of land, and land-rent remains an important element of surplus. The analytical resolution of these contradictory aspects is obviously not to be sought in agriculture, but in the economy as a whole, and specifically in the contradictions of capitalist development under the aegis of a bourgeois-landlord State, and against the background of its complex relations with imperialism.

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1 A recent review of the debate can be found in Thorner, 1982

2 See especially Bhaduri 1973, Banaji 1977, and Patnaik 1976

3 One finding which is not immediately related to the debate on the mode of production, but is relevant to it is that our material throws considerable doubt on the alleged inverse relationship between farm size and productivity asserted by many writers (see for instance Berry and Cline 1979). Instead, our data demonstrate that intensity of input use and advantages of class are decisive influences on productivity. For a detailed discussion see Athreya et al 1980b.

4 The point should be stressed that in any comprehensive—i.e. economic, political and ideological—conceptualization of class, the distinction between rich peasants and landlords would of course be important.

5 Prices received by big capitalist farmers in the wet area for paddy were, on the average, 25 per cent higher in the case of local and improved varieties, and 10 per cent higher in the case of HYV's, than the prices received by the poor and middle peasants. In the case of some banana varieties, big capitalist farmers received prices which were higher by almost two thirds. Similary, in the dry area, capitalist famers enjoyed a 15-20 per cent price advantage

over poor and middle peasants in the case of cumbu and HYV paddy. For a further discusison of this point see Athreya et al 1985b

6 It is worthwhile to emphasize here that the transition from usury to credit is by no means complete in our study area Private moneylenders still cater to about half of the credit needs, and the less-usurious rates of interest have by no means benefitted each and everybody. Second, the massive rates of default may bring about a retreat of credit capital, leaving a bigger share of the market to usurious capital and, in the same process, giving it a chance to hike up the interest rates again. Third, and most important, there is no automatism built into the expansion of credit capital It is not primarily the result of a self-reproduction of capital. The active agent is instead the State, the whole process is a result of State intervention a political intervention in the economic the aim of which is to increase the level of commoditization in the agrarian economy

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Tramworkers of Calcutta : Some Reflections On their Unionisation and Political Experience 1920 to 1930.

THE YEAR 1920 is rather significant in many ways, in the history of working class struggle in modern India. It was from about this time that the working class of India began to be involved in the broader stream of the nationalist politics. Although Bombay workers had launched a political strike in 1908 to protest against Tilak's arrest and Gandhi made his enigmatic experiments with the Ahmedabad mill hands in 1917-18, the labour force in India began to come out of the orbit of narrow economic demands to associate itself with the outsiders for organising itself only from 1920.

In 1919 the Indian National Congress at its 35th session in Amritsar urged its provincial Committees to secure for the working class "a proper place in the body politic of India".[1] In 1920 the first federation of Indian trade unions, the All India Trade Union Congress (A.I.T.U.C.), had its birth and its inaugural session witnessed the presence of eminent Congress leaders, though this whole process took place much against the wishes of Gandhi.[2] The strike wave of the early 20s in different industries throughout India saw the working class emerge as a significant force. This obviously accelerated the process of interaction between the Indian National Congress and the working class. Despite the efforts of the Indian National Congress to win over the support and sympathy of the workers, the latter in many industries rallied behind the Communist Party of India (C.P.I.), after its genesis in 1925. The case of the tramwaymen of Calcutta also tells a similar story. They were trying to get themselves organised against their employers with a view to redressing their grievances and at this crucial phase, important Congress leaders of Bengal came forward to unionise them in 1920. Eventually disillusioned over the experiences of the early 1920s, the tramwaymen, however, gradually began to switch over from the Congress fold to the Communist forum. This essay attempts to look into the whole process of unionisation of tramworkers as well as to examine the factors responsible for their disillusionment with the Congress leadership, and their gravitation towards the Communist party. It will also be shown how the Communists inspired them to fight not only on rudimentary economic issues but also to respond to events of political significance.

General Condition of Tramwaymen of Calcutta

In the early 20s the tramwaymen were subject to oppressive service conditions by the British monopolist Calcutta Tramways Company. The work force of the Company consisted of two categories. Those in the traffic section were drivers and conductors, while those engaged in Nonapukur workshop were engaged mainly in welding, painting and the assembling of different parts.[1] Apart from them, there were checkers and inspectors, who belonged to supervisory rank and clerks in the head office.

A person belonging to the traffic staff (either as a driver or a conductor) had to work for 12 hours a day against a monthly pay of Rs. 19.[1] But he could not earn even this meagre amount since he was employed purely on a daily wage basis. As the Company used to engage surplus staff, he would often be deprived of his daily employment. Leave-casual or otherwise–was unknown to him. In the case of injury, due to accidents during duty hours, he received neither any allowance "on compassionate ground", nor the wages during the period of his absence due to injury. In cases of accidents for which he was not responsible, his attendance at the court was compulsory; he could claim neither his pay-during these days (often numbering 10 to 20 days at a stretch) nor his travelling expenses, which he himself had to bear. From 1918 onwards, the issuing of overcoats to the members of the traffic staff during the winter season had been stopped : trams would start plying at 4.30 a.m. in the morning and remained on rails upto 12 at night To fight the cold he had to buy his own winter garments.[5] There was a Workman's Compensation Act since 1923, but it did not cover the workers of small factories, mines, the railways and tramways.[6]

Apart from these strains, inflicted by the Company, a member of the traffic staff was constantly harassed by the flying checkers and inspectors who tried to exact illegal 'gratuity' from him. Whenever the worker refused to meet the dishonest demand of the checkers and inspectors, the latter would lodge a false complaint to the management against the man concerned. He was suspended or even dismissed often without any proper enquiry.[7] Along with his job went his salary due and also his deposit money (every worker had to deposit Rs. 31 with the Company at the time of joining) a case which the aggrieved man referred to as a "forfeit case". To go back to his native place, he had to sell his household goods and utensils and sometimes even had to borrow money from friends and relations.[8] This practice had the further adverse effect on the workers of leading them into the clutches of money lenders.[9] These latter, together with the inspectors and checkers, drove the workers to extreme poverty.

The First Strike : From Spontaneity to Organisation :

With the intention of ameliorating their precarious economic conditions, the tramwaymen of the traffic section placed a petition before the General Manager of the Company in June 1920, demanding an increase in

the wages. In reply, they were informed that the General Manager was awaiting the instructions of the Directors of the Company in London.[10] Meanwhile, in August, two drivers of the Company were sacked, allegedly for inciting the tramwaymen against the management.[11] On the 11th of September, the Police Commissioner of Calcutta suddenly received an anonymous petition, containing a list of grievances of Calcutta tramwaymen. Their demands in the petition included a 75 percent increase in wages, supply of free uniforms and reinstatement of the two retrenched workers.[12] The Police Commissioner, whose concern was to avoid the impasse that would be caused by a transport strike in the city, approached both the management and the workers to come to an amicable settlement. But his efforts proved futile. The workers ultimately made it clear that unless favourable orders were passed on the petitions submitted to the Police Commissioner and management, they would resort to a continuous strike from the 1st of October.[13] Tramwaymen's grievances went unheeded and they struck work on the first day of October.

It is not clear why the drivers and conductors submitted an anonymous petition and why they picked on the Police Commissioner to place their demands with. The tramwaymen who had no association at that time did not dare expose the names of their leaders. This simple evidence throws light on the uncertainty in which they had to work. As to the second question, the plausible answer may be that the men, being apprehensive of police excesses in the event of their resorting to a strike, kept the most important man of the Calcutta Police informed about their position.

About 2,500 drivers and conductors kept themselves away from normal duty on 1st of October, which led to a virtual paralysis of the city life.[14] The management of the Company tried desperately to retain normal services of tramcars. The checkers and inspectors, who were generally Anglo-Indians and were better paid, volunteered their services as drivers and conductors The strikers on the other hand fought hard to make their stike a success. On the 1st of October, the Razabazar tram depot became a scene of violence. One Mr. Kettle, trying to drive a car, received resistance from the strikers. He knocked down a conductor. Infuriated, the strikers attacked Kettle, who had to be rescued by the police.[15]

The eruption of violence proved alarming both to the management, as well as to the Government. Moreover, Congress leaders of Bengal who believed in the credo of non-violence preached by Gandhi also did not like the vio[illegible] stance of the strikers. Hence a meeting took place between the workers and management on the 3rd of October, at the initiative of the Government. The workers were represented by two drivers, two conductors and five other 'gentlemen' who were not in the service of the Tramways Company.[16] The identity of three of these five gentlemen is known. They were Nisith Chandra Sen, Byomkesh Chakrabarti and Nirmal Chander Chandra; the first two were barristers. All the three gentlemen were prominent Congress leaders and reportedly "staunch non-cooperators".[17] In that meeting, the General Manager of the Company agreed to increase the

initial pay from Rs. 19 to Rs. 24, supply free uniforms and reinstate discharged drivers. The men insisted that the two retrenched drivers should be allowed to drive the first cars on 4th of October, when they would resume their duty. The General Manager had to agree.[18] Tramwaymen were jubilant with their victory and shouted, "Kali Mai Ki Joy".[19] This slogan indicates that the impact of Swadeshi Movement was still fresh among the tramworkers. "Kali Mai" as a symbol of spirit (Shakti) played a vital role in crystallizing Swadeshi ideology. In fact, Sumit Sarkar has used Jadu Gopal Mukherjee's 'Biblabi Jibaner Smritikatha' to give us the information that in October 1905, the tram drivers and conductors had observed a token strike in support of the Swadeshis.[20] A considerable number of drivers and conductors of the early 20s, who also participated in the strike during the Swadeshi Movement were still swayed by the war-cry, "Kali Mai Ki Joy". That religion had nothing to do with the slogan is clear from the fact that one of the leaders of the strike was Mahmod Siddique, a Muslim driver.[21] However, at the initiative of the Government on the one hand and the non-cooperator 'Bhadraloks' on the other, the strike came to an end and trams started plying from 4th October, as usual.

For the first time in the history of tramwaymen of Calcutta the Congress leaders had come forward to represent them in their meeting with the management, with a view to ending the deadlock. They now also helped the tramworkers to form their association. The importance of the strike of October 1920, lay in the fact that it led to the formation of Calcutta Tramways Employees Union (hereafter C.T.E.U.), the first union of the Calcutta Tramwaymen.[22] Nisith Chandra Sen was the first President and Gayatri Prasad Choubey, a dismissed conductor, the first Secretary.[23]

The Second Strike : Days of Militancy

As days passed, the tramwaymen found to their chagrin that most of the decisions of the meeting of 3rd October had remained unimplemented. They began to think about another strike. On the 23rd of January, 1921, they placed a fresh charter of demands before the General Manager of the Company. The Charter included : (1) fixation of eight hours as a working day and payment of overtime allowance for work done in excess;[24] (2) fixed monthly salary on a graduated scale with a minimum pay of Rs. 30;(3) no introduction of any more extra hands till all men had been provided with permanent jobs; (4) fair distribution of work by the head starter; (5) introduction of a neutral enquiry in cases reported by flying checkers and inspectors; (6) granting of compassionate allwances in cases of accidents on duty; (7) introduction of casual and privilege leave; (8) opportunity to be given to a conductor to make good any shortage of cash, without his necessarly being suspected; (9) abolition of the forfeiture system except in cases where a man was found guilty of cheating by a Competent Court of justice; (10) no dismissal of any employee without an enquiry being conducted in his presence; (11) counting attendance in court as a witness of the Company as attendance on duty; and (12) free supply of overcoats in the winter season.[25]

In the same Charter, the workers requested the General Manager to give his decision regarding these demands on or before the 25th of January, otherwise they would have to go on strike. Nowhere in the Charter was there any mention of C.T.E.U. or its office bearers. The address of its senders was given as Drivers and Conductors C/o. Walter Mother, Nikarapara, Tollygunge, the address of a tramwaymen's mess[26] and not 23 Wellington Street, which was the address of the C.T.E.U. office.[27]

The management turned a deaf ear to the tramworkers' demands. The traffic staff of Calcutta tramways assembled in a meeting at Esplanade junction on 26th January, 1921. During this period Gandhi was in Calcutta. Being briefed about the condition of tramwaymen of Calcutta he decided to attend the meeting. Tramworkers waited for hours, but Gandhi did not turn up and diverted himself of the responsibility by sending a note of excuse.[28] Why Gandhi did not attend the meeting of the tramworkers may be any body's guess. However, it is possible to explain his absense in the context of his political stand vis-a-vis labour : in a letter to Shapurji Sakhlatvala, a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, Gandhi wrote:

"Labour in India is still extremely unorganised. The labourers have no mind of their own when it comes to national policy or welfare of labour itself...... It is highly provincial and even in the same city it is highly communal.'"[29]

Notwithstanding Gandhi's absence, prominent Bengal Congressmen sought to influence the decision of the meeting and tried to avert a strike. The President of C.T.E.U., N.C. Sen requested the men to settle the issue amicably and not to go in for a strike. But the workers refused to accept his proposal. N.C. Chunder also tried to convince the workers to stay away from a strike, but in vain. G.P. Chowdhury, another Congressman and at the same time a union office bearer also reminded the workers of the great distress associated with such a strike. The workers responded with : "That we know". "Are you determined to go to a strike?" Chowdhury asked. "Yes, Yes" was the answer. "Are you prepared to go to jail?" Chowdhury persisted. The reply was again in the affirmative. The Congress leader then used the last weapon out of his arsenal : "Are you prepared to remain unemployed for two months or more?" Again, "Yes" was the answer of the thousands of workers assembled on the spot. The advice of the Bengal Congress leaders, "to settle down quietly" was rejected in unequivocal terms, and all the drivers and conductors shouted, "We shall strike from tomorrow morning and no first car shall leave the depot". Failing to persuade the workers to pull back from the strike decision, the President of the C.T.E.U., N.C. Sen said, "As you have decided on striking all I can say to you is that there must be no *Zhoolum*, there must be no *marpeet*." A worker, present in the meeting immediately stood up and asked, "If anybody tries to take out a car?" "Hat joro, pai paro" (fold your hands and fall at their feet) was Sen's answer.[30] But the events of the subsequent days would demonstrate that workers were never swayed by the advice of the non-violent president : they fought the betrayers and the blacklegs when the situation demanded.

The details of the meeting clearly show that the workers completely

differred from the Gandhite labour leaders on the means to fight out their cause. Thus the decision of going in for a strike in clear disregard of the Congress leaders' advice shows beyond doubt that the decision regarding their protest movements rested with the workers and not with Congress officials

About 3,000 drivers and conductors struck work from 27th January, 1921. The President of C.T.E U expressed his regret at the occurrence of the strike and won the praise of the British bureaucracy for trying to induce the workers to "proceed constitutionally."[31]

The Duke of Cannaught visited Calcutta on the 28th of January. Not a single tram was seen plying that day. The tram strike was described by the Government as a pre-planned one, aimed at disturbing the "Royal visit" and it was suspected that "local students and striking workers were being incited by the extremist organs of Calcutta". The same official communique lamented, "Gandhi's reiterated advice to learn Hindustani and use Charkha was not satisfying them (the striking workers and the students–author). Moreover local extremist organs are explaining that Gandhi's advice must not be taken too literally."[32] No evidence is available to corroborate this statement that tramwaymen's decision to go in for a strike at that specific moment was a pre-determined manoeuvre to upset the "Royal Visit" However, one cannot avoid the feeling that the tramwaymen, in the course of their struggle for better wage and improved working conditions, came to forge a link with the broader extremist politics of Bengal.

On 31st January, N.C. Sen, without taking consent from the striking workers opened a dialogue with the management. Sen requested the authorities to appoint a Committee consisting of two non-official Europeans and two members nominated by the Union.[33] But his proposal was turned down The management took a rigid stand and categorically stated that this strike was engineered by "ulterior motives" and lacked any genuine cause. The management however did not spell out whose "ulterior motives" precipitated this strike. Nor did Sen demand any clarification of the term. The management handed over to him the following statement :

"Unless the men come back to work, we are not prepared to discuss the matter. On no account can any further increase of pay be granted. We are prepared to reinstate all the men, with exception to driver no. 134."[34]

Having refused to accept even the modest proposal of the President of C.T.E.U., the management resolved to break the strike with the help of black-legs. The Company began to recruit Anglo-Indian drivers and conductors at an exorbitant rate of Rs. 3 per day.[35] This attempt of the Company to run cars at any cost met with stiff resistance from the strikers. The strike however continued amidst a few scuffles between the strikers and the black-legs in several depots.

The 11th day of February was an eventful one in many ways. Violence erupted in Nonapukur Depot, when the black legs tried to take out the cars in the morning. Strikers attacked the black legs. One such element, Ram Kamal

Bhattacharya, a conductor, was assaulted by the strikers. As the situation took a serious turn, the management communicated with the police head quarters. A strong police contingent was sent to counteract the working class violence. Massive lathi charge by the police brought the situation under control.[16]

At about 5 P.M. on the same day, the strikers assembled in a meeting "to assess the position of the strike." The union leaders advised them to show restraint in the face of provocation. The strikers also pledged to pursuade the men, who had broken away, to join them again. After the meeting tramwaymen paraded the Dhurmotala Street with shouts of "Gandhi Maharaja Ki Joy".[17] Gandhi's launching of the Non-cooperation movement gave him a glorious image. Evidently, the tramwaymen of Calcutta belonged to that lot of fighters seen both in the industrial and agricultural sectors who, despite the fact that Gandhi did not encourage them, saw him nevertheless as a charismatic leader, a symbol of protest against oppression and indignation imposed by imperialist Raj.

The use of this slogan did not mean that the tramwaymen perceived Gandhian Non-Violence as an appropriate and sufficient means to fight their employer. The events in the Kalighat tram depot on 18th February provide ample evidence of this.[18] The Company imported a large number of strike breakers to Kalighat depot on that day. The majority of the blacklegs, again, were Anglo-Indians. Incensed at finding the blacklegs, the strikers at Kalighat stopped the cars and pulled them out of driver's cabin. The blacklegs attacked the strikers with stones and bamboos snatched from nearby roofs. The strikers were taken aback and were pushed to the Shahebbagan Bustee, adjacent to the Kalighat tram depot. The impudence of the Anglo-Indians proved irksome to the slum dwellers, and they rallied on the side of the strikers. Thus reinforced, the tramworkers once again attacked the blacklegs with shouts of "Maro Sala Feringi Lokego" (Assail those bloody Anglo-Indians).[19] A police contigent reached the troubled spot to rescue the blacklegs. Unheeding, the strikers, along with the slum people continued their attack on the blacklegs. A sargent van appeared on the scene and opened fire on the militant crowd. A tramworker was killed and several others including the slum people were injured.[20] This incident demonstrated that to the tramwaymen neither the peaceful strike, nor the leisurely petition to the management appeared as the most appropriate weapon to win their demands. To counter the highhandedness of the alien management, acts of violence by the workers tended to be the rule, rather than the exception, and trade disputes often tended to develop into riot situations.

In the eyes of the British bureaucracy, the residents of Shahebbagan were a "turbulent class of Mohammedans".[21] In fact, Shahebbagan was a working class slum area, comprising mainly rickshaw pullers and daily wage earners, engaged in small industrial units in Calcutta and its suburbs. The toilers of Shahebbagan had recourse to violence only when they saw innocent strikers being manhandled by the black-legs. Their action evidently counters any lingering notions of the crowd as a mysterious, vague and hapazard

phenomenon, composed of social misfits and occurring almost by change.[12]

However, police firing in Kalighat created a sensation. On the next day (19th February), a debate was held in the Calcutta Corporation. The Corporation dominated by Congressmen, passed a resolution requesting the Government to take such steps as they might deem fit "to terminate the present deadlock and prevent such deadlocks in near future."[13] The Government immediately entered into communication with the parties to the dispute. On 23rd February, it was settled that men at strike should return to work on the next day and that the Company should announce its decision on tramwaymen's charter of 23rd January, 1921. In case the Company's decision failed to satisfy the workers, the Government would constitute a Committee to investigate their grievances.[14] Thus the strike came to an end and the streets of Calcutta again heard the clamour of tram cars on 24th February, after twenty-seven days.[15]

The Company's decision stated that all the workers excepting driver no. 134 would be allowed to continue their service and the Company would make a proper investigation of their grievances.[16] The tramwaymen naturally thought that these decisions evaded the vital issues and refused to accept them. The Government immediately set up a Committee known as the Calcutta Tramways Strike Committee. The members of the Committee were : D.B. Meek, Director of Industries (Chairman of the Committee); R.S Watron Smyth, President, Bengal Chamber of Commerce; Byomkesh Chakravarti; Rai Chunilal Bose Bahadur, Sheriff of Calcutta; and G.H.W. Davies, I.C.S.[17].

Among these members only Byomkesh Chakravarty, a Congressman and a rich barrister was the representative of the workers. The Committee made certain recommendations, the majority of which went in favour of the Company. The Committee's report categorically stated : "We do not feel justified in recommending any change in the present scale of pay". It further recommended that "all power regarding dismissal, suspension and forfeiture of deposit will remain with the Company, though it added vaguely that the Company should deal with such cases with "careful consideration". So far as workers' interest was concerned, it recommended a nine-hour working day, instead of twelve hours and 3 weeks' annual leave with half pay. Regarding other grievances the Committee remained silent as "they were not pressed by the representatives of men".[18] The Committee did not take any clear stand regarding the reinstatement of the dismissed driver no. 134. Interestingly enough, even the C.T.E.U. also kept silent about this dismissal. The drivers and conductors of Calcutta tramways, who kept the strike going for nearly a month, were so exhausted by the insolence of the Company on the one hand and the irresponsibility of the C.T.E.U. leader on the other, that they had no alternative but to accept the recommendations of the Committee and resume work, leaving behind them their retrenched comrade, the driver no. 134.

Despite the failure of the strike, its importance should not be

minimised, the Calcutta tramwaymen had not only fought against systematic repression by their white employers, but had done so unitedly and unhesitatingly even against the advice of Congress leaders, who posed as the non-violent well wishers of the workers. Moreover, like many other strikes of the period, this strike also horrified the ruling class with the spectre of Bolshevism.[50]

The Third Strike : Repression and Aftermath

Once the strike of early 1921 came to an end, the Company began a double-edged policy. At first, the minimum pay of the drivers and conductors was raised from Rs. 19 to Rs. 24.50 which delighted the workers. Then the Company started a policy of unleashing repression upon the workers, with redoubled energy. In August, 1921, the management dismissed seventy conductors for alleged dishonesty. The order was summed up thus : the "notorious" conductors were retrenched "for pocketing pice, without issuing tickets"[51] Strangely enough not a single enquiry was held before this decision was taken. In fact, all the retrenched conductors had played a leading role in their action against the Company in early '21. The tramwaymen viewed this vindictive act of the Company with great concern and requested that the order be revoked and the entire matter examined "with careful consideration". But the Company turned a deaf ear to the workmen's plea.

On the 4th September, tram drivers and conductors assembled in a meeting and decided to strike from the 5th to protest against such unlawful retrenchment.[52] The C.T E.U. leaders thus far had not executed their duties to pressurise the management to bring the dismissed workers back. But in this meeting they made their presence felt, again by trying to induce the workers not to go in for a strike immediately, which would mean a "terrible inconvinience to the travelling public" of Calcutta.[53] The members of the Traffic staff of Calcutta Tramways, however, again launched a strike, "in defiance of the advice of the President of C.T.E.U." on 5th September.[54]

The strike caused complete disarray in city transport for two days (5th and 6th September). On the 6th night the President of the C.T.E.U. met the strikers and urged them to return to work.[55] He again reminded them of the evil consequences they might have to face for participating in the strike. Tramwaymen were already dejected at the unhappy ending of the strike of February 1921. Moreover, the sudden dismissal of their fellow workers in August came as a severe blow and threatened their job security. The Government and the Company not only condemned this strike; they also tried to break it at any cost. Black-leg were imported on an unprecedented scale to keep the trams moving. The situation was such that even the Employees' Association of Calcutta, an organisation of middle class and white collar employees of different units, in a resolution, urged the Bengali youths "not to be enlisted as black-legs and deprive living of thousands of tramway employees summarily dismissed by the Company."[56] The situation however showed no signs of improvement so far as the tramwaymen were concerned. At this stage C.T.E.U. President's constant harping on the theme of

impending danger as the out come of their strike unnerved the workers, and they began to lose hope. On the 7th, there was partial resumption of work. Within two or three days, almost all the workers returned to work unconditionally.[57]

By this time, some individuals in India had already established their links with the Communist International and Moscow, and some of the tramwaymen came in contact with such individuals. This is testified to by a pamphlet received by the management of the Company during the strike of September 1921. The pseudonym of the author of the pamphlet was "Communist". The pamphlet read :

"Ye of the well fed and comfortable class. We do not threaten : We warn. We indulge neither in vain hopes nor in craven despair : We seek to make sure. We take our stand by the side of those whom capitalism has cast out. We say of them and for them—these are flesh and blood even as Ye. Because they are flesh and blood, they have as much right as anybody to be fed, clothed and sheltered with honour and dignity. They have right of an opportunity to repay the cost of their keep (as all men should) by labour useful to their fellowmen. You, who by incompetence, callousness, cupidity or neglect, debar them from this right are guilty of crime against them.

"It is the consequence of your crime, which confronts you today."[58]

Years of Tranquility and Transition : 1922-1927.

Tramwaymen's protest against retrenchment could not gain much ground and their unconditional resumption of work in September, 1921 naturally enthused the management. The management struck again by retrenching at least three hundred workers towards the end of 1921.[59] But this time not a single protest of the workers confronted the Company. In fact workingmen's sad experience in their struggle against the management gave their hopes and aspirations a staggering blow. Hence the years succeeding 1921 were largely eventless for the tramwaymen of Calcutta. During these years of apparent lull, while still despising the colonial Government and their British employers, they also developed a mistrust of the nationalist leaders and union office bearers. The C.T.E.U. gradually went defunct.

Meanwhile, on the national scene, a great change was taking place. The rising tide of workingclass movement in different parts of India in the early 20s compelled the Government to enact certain liberal labour laws. One such important enactment was the Indian Trade Union Act of 1926, which allowed any seven persons of a Company or concern to form a registered trade union.[60] In 1927, the Indian Trade Union Act led to the reorganisation of the C.T.E.U under a new name, Calcutta Tramways Workers' Union (hereafter CTWU).[61] The change in the name and office bearers suggested the influence of communists. In July 1924, the Communist International had decided that a new Communist Party should be formed in India, as one of its branches. Accordingly, the first Conference of the Indian Communists was held in Kanpur in December; 1925.[62] Bhupendranath Dutta, a doyen of the Marxist theroeticians in India was the President of C.T.W.U. and Sibnath

Banerjee, a socialist leader, who had developed some links with communists abroad in the early years of his political career its Secretary.[63] In 1927, the new C.T.W.U. was affiliated to AITUC.

Tramwaymen's experience with the C.T.E.U. leaders in early 20s still haunted them and in the beginning they looked upon the new leaders with similar distrust. But a section of the tramwaymen realised that the new comers were different from their earlier leaders. Within that year, the membership of the new union rose to 800.[64]

The Communist Party of India which during this period acted as a segment in the broad platform of the Indian National Congress, functioned in Bengal within the Bengal Workers' and Peasant Party (BWPP). The BWPP leaders were trying to organise the working class of different industrial sectors. As a part of their programme, they worked to bring the tramwaymen under their influence. The workers, who lost their jobs in 1921 acted as an auxiliary force in this effort of the BWPP leaders. A large number of those sacked workers had not left Calcutta. Some of them now worked in small industrial units while some others earned their living as pedlars. These men did not sever links with their old comrades, who still worked in the Calcutta Tramways. When in 1927 the BWPP leaders contacted these people, they readily acted as the link between the BWPP and the tramworkers. One such worker was Kali Shom, a driver, discharged in 1921, whose unrelenting efforts to associate the tramwaymen with BWPP is still remembered by Dhiren Majumdar, one of the founding leader of the C.T.W.U..[65] Thus the penetration of communist ideology within the tramwaymen was facilitated through the dismissed workers' efforts.

The number of C.T.W.U. members was 800 in 1927. True that, the enrolement of 800 men or only 13.3 per cent of the Company's 6,000 employees did not present a very rosy picture for the new union, but in the very year of its inception even this was no mean a task.[66]

The Simon Commission : Acid Test of the New Union

The coming of the Simon Commission in early 1928 came as a test case for the new union. The British Government appointed the Indian Statutory Commission, known popularly after the name of its Chairman as Simon Commission, in November 1927 to go into the question of further constitutional reforms. The Commission was due to arrive in India on 3rd February 1928. All the members of the Commission were Englishmen and reflected a racist arrogance which hurt the dignity and national sentiment of the Indians. In January, John Simon received a letter from S.S. Mirajakar, a pioneer of the Bombay communists—in which the latter branded the Commission as a "gang of robbers".[67] On the 11th January a mass meeting held under the auspices of Bombay Municipal Workmen's Union resolved to observe "a universal strike in all departments of the Municipality on the day of arrival" of the Commission.[68] Marxist radicals like Nimbkar, Dange, Ranadive, etc., were closely associated with this union. In the middle of January, the All Parties Conference unanimously decided that the Simon

Commission must be "left severely alone" by the people of India. It appealed to the people to observe a 'hartal' on the 3rd February, all over the country from morning to 4 30 P M in the evening.[69] Shapurji Sakhlatvala, a communist member in the British Parliament who also had close links with Indian communists, thundered in the House that the Commission was being sent with a view "to perpetuate the imperial rule in India". He also hailed the decision of the All Party Conference to boycott the Commission and observe a hartal on the day of its arrival.[70] From the available evidence, it seems clear that the Communists in India too, along with other political parties, demonstrated their opposition to the all-white Commission.

Accordingly, the BWPP set itself the task of making the 'hartal' a grand success.[71] The leaders of C.T.W.U. put up a tireless effort to mobilise the tramworkers against the Commission and the tramwaymen of Calcutta did not lag behind in their struggle against British imperialism. In the meeting of 22nd January, 1928 in Calcutta Maidan, held under the auspices of C.T.W.U., tramworkers expressed their willingness to observe hartal on 3rd February.[72]

The Calcutta Tramways Company, when it heard of the hartal programme of the tramwaymen, proceeded to tackle it with its usual brutality The Company put up a notice in its Head Office, stating clearly that any worker who remained absent on the 3rd February will be summarily dismissed. The Company also arranged to keep the drivers and conductors forcibly confined in their respective depots during the night of 2nd February.

On the day before the proposed 'hartal' a conductor was caught by the Traffic Superintendent for distributing leaflets among the workers, which appealed for a boycott of the Simon Commission. The Traffic Superintendent immediately took away the leaflets and trampled upon them. Within a few minutes he put up a fresh notice, at the Company's Head Office, threatening once again that absence from work on the 3rd would result in dismissal. But the notice was torn up by the angry tramworkers, leading to the consequent dismissal of two conductors.[73]

In the evening of the 2nd February police and military forces heavily guarded all the important depots of Calcutta and Howrah and prevented every member of the traffic staff from leaving the depot after duty hours. Evidently, this proved irksome to the workers, but they could do nothing and had to stay in the depots.[74] As the morning broke in Calcutta on the 'hartal' day, there was a strange scene on the roads. Tramcars containing tramworkers and armed policemen were plying along the rails. The tramworkers had been compelled at gunpoints to keep the cars running.[75]

But not all of them : even the threat of force failed to goad the men at Kalighat depot and Tollygunge depot to work. At the Kalighat depot, leaders of the CTWU spoke to the men about the ulterior motives of the Simon Commission and their political implication. The police attempt to terrorise them

to run cars was evidently a failure as not a single car went out of the depot.[77] At Tollygunge depot, the men resisted the blacklegs who came to run cars. When the police came to the defence of the blacklegs, there was a show-down between the police and the tramwaymen. The police opened fire on men, killed two and injured at least thirty.[78] Sibnath Banerjee, the CTWU Secretary soon appeared on the scene and condemned the police action. The police at first gave him a rough treatment and then arrested him.[79]

On the 4th February, the Company dismissed four workers and suspended many others, allegedly for creating disturbance on the 3rd February. It also declared that those who did not join the strike would be rewarded.[80] Somnath Lahiri, an early communist in Bengal, who associated himself with the CTWU for a considerable length of time, depicted the tale of police repression on the tram workers during the anti-Simon agitation, in his short story "Akabaka". The story reveals how the company rewarded the blacklegs, as a token of gratitude, who went all out to foil the political stirrings of the working class.[81]

This political struggle of thw workers was not to be erased easily from the minds of the management. H.R. Dain, a high Company Official, in his statement before the Royal Commission on Labour in India, in 1930 expressed grave concern over the fact that though there was not a single strike in the recent years, there was indeed a " 'hartal' i.e., the 'hartal' of 3rd February, 1928. A member of the Commission asked Dain to clarify the difference between 'hartal' and a strike. Dain replied that "strikes" occurred as a consequence of "trade disputes", "but there is no trade dispute involved in a 'Hartal' ".[82]

Though the tramworkers' protest movement against the Simon Commission was brutally suppressed, they discovered that unlike the leaders of the early 20s, the leaders of CTWU did not shake off their responsibility by condemning the militancy of the strikers. When the tramworkers faced the onslaught of the state, these leaders stood by their side and unhesitatingly faced torture and imprisonment. They lost their battle against the Company and the state on the issue of Simon Commission. It was a set back no doubt, but they were convinced that such setbacks were necessary stepping stones for marching towards a better future.

The Remaining Years :

The BWPP not only worked hard to emerge as the vanguard of the tramwaymen but also tried to involve them in various forms of political activities. Tramwaymen were active participants in the striking demonstration of the Calcutta working class in December, 1928, led by the BWPP.[83] The workers, while marching towards the Congress session in Park Circus, were manhandled by the Bengal Volunteers,[84] and "it is said Subhash Bose, 'GOC' of the volunteers, even wanted to call in the police".[85] The objective of the workers was to appeal to the Congress leaders to support their modest demand for reduction of working hours, stopping retrenchment in different industries and a resolution for Purna Swaraj.[86] This infact was an eye opener for the

workers, and many of them including the tramwaymen began to give a fres thought to the attitude of Congress leaders towards the working class.[87] Fror an official note it is known that Subhash Bose was trying to extend h influence over the tramwaymen of Calcutta towards the end of the 20s, bı received very little response.[88]

In 1929, the Government of India being apprehensive of Communi activities throughout India, framed the Meerut Conspiracy Case and arreste a number of labour leaders, including some British communists. CTW Secretary, Sibnath Banerjee was among those arrested. On 21st April, 192 the meeting of the CTWU, under the presidentship of an early communis Bankim Mukherjee, condemned the Meerut Conspiracy Case and expresse sympathy for the arrested leaders.[89] Despite poor attendance at the meetin it was a demonstration of working class solidarity and the tramwaymen growing political maturity.

After the arrest of Sibnath Banerjee, P K. Sanyal acted as Secretary of th CTWU The third decade of the 20th century ended for the tramwaymen c Calcutta, with concern expressed by P.K. Sanyal over the small number c unionised tram workers. In a meeting of the tram workers, on 29th Decen ber, 1929, he stressed the necessity of joining the CTWU.[90]

Some General Observations

Some important points emerge from our study of Calcutta tran waymen's movement in the 1920s. Among the total body of tram workers th drivers and conductors who had to deal with the urban population in the daily life, were undoubtedly the leading elements. Incidentally, the strikes c early 20s were launched by them, with marginal support from men in NOı apukur workshop. Members of the traffic staff, particularly the retrenche drivers and conductors, were instrumental in forming a new union in 192 led by the communists Most members of the new union came from the tra fic section. During the anti-Simon phase of the nationalist struggle, it was th drivers and conductors who initiated the struggle among the tramwaymer Repression thus fell heavily on them. The reason behind their militancy wa possibly their bargaining strength. Their bargaining position was excep tionally strong, as they could bring the traffic system to a standstill wheneve they wanted. A comparison with Hobsbawm's findings on labour protest would not be out of place here In the British Gas industry, a similar bargain ing position was enjoyed by the stokers and fireman, whose services wer indispensible to the industry. These stokers and firemen formed the mos active and politically conscious workers in the British Gas industry.[91] I Britain as well as in other countries in Europe the most militant an politically advanced elements among the toiling people came from th skilled craftsmen.[92]

Tramways being a public utility were a focus of public concern an public opinion. As it was a British Company, the people of Calcutta saw it workers' movement not as an isolated case of employees' agitation against th management but as a united struggle of the Indians against Britis

imperialism. In the course of our discussion, we have seen that the Calcuttans were ready to help the striking workers whenever the situation so demanded. The slum dwellers of Sahebbagan came as their saviours, when they were attacked by the Anglo-Indian blacklegs and Company-hired hoodlums. The middle class of Calcutta through its Employees' Association appealed to the Bengali youths not to serve the Company's interests by joining it as blacklegs. Tramways being the fulcrum of city transport in the 20s, a strike of its workers meant an insuperable difficulty for the middle class employees in Calcutta, yet the Calcutians extended their support to the cause of the strikers and not a single manifestation of public wrath against the strikers was visible.[84] Tramwaymen's bargaining strength was undoubtedly derived in a large measure from this.

The eventful 1920s provided the basis for a stronger trade union of the tramworkers in the late 1930s and 1940s. In the course of their struggle against the management as well as against the state machinery, they were involved in the process of selecting and rejecting their vanguards. The Congress leadership consisting of philanthropists largely devoid of any positive policy which could cater to the workingclass interests, was summarily rejected by the Calcutta Tramwaymen in the wake of the employers' offensive. The continuous struggle waged by the working class created the necessity for a more radical organisation that would ensure its effectiveness.

Our study is also of relevance in the context of the debates which have recently taken place on the analysis of working class struggles.[91] Working class struggles have been perceived often within a syndrome of struggle-consciousness-defeat. Such a perception not only negates the struggle-setback-struggle syndrome but also identifies temporary setbacks as 'defeats' emerging out of structural constraints within the working-class rather than a higher level of tactical combativeness of the ruling class. Tramwaymen's movements in the early 1920s ended wtih retrenchment, hunger and wretchedness but perhaps also with hope. Their protest against the Simon Commission marked only the beginning of organised and more developed struggles of the CTWU in subsequent years. Days of glorious struggles in the 1940s provided an answer to the poor tramwaymen's dream of the 1920s.

1 P P Lakshman. *Congress and the Labour Movement in India*, Allahabad, 1947 P 17.

2 *A.I T U C Fifty Years Documents* (Volume I). New Delhi, 1973 *S.A Dange's Introduction* P. IXXXIII.

3 For details see my article, *"Tramwaymen of Calcutta their movement and organisation : 1920-47"*. in Chittabrata Palit Edited *Revolt Studies* Vol.I, No. 2, December 1985.

4. *The Statesman and Friend of India*. 2nd October, 1920.

5. *Calcutta Gazette (Supplimentary)* 13th April, 1921. P. 695.

72 *Forward* 25th January, 1928

73. *Ibid*, 3rd February

74 *Ibid*

75 *Ibid*

76 *Ibid*, 4th February 1928

77 *Ibid*

78 *Ibid*, Also R C L I, Vol V, Pt II, P 62

79 *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5th February, 1928

80 *Forward*, 5th February 1928

81 Somenath Lahiri *Kaliyuger Galpa* (In Bengali), Calcutta, 1985, P 141

82 R C L I, Vol V, Pt II, P 62

83 Sukomel Sen *Working Class of India History of Emergence and Movement, 1830-1970*, Calcutta, 1979, P 289

84 Saroj Mukhopadhya *Bharater Communist Party O' Amra*, Pratham Khanda (In Bengali), Calcutta, 1985, P 15

85 Sumit Sarkar *Modern India 1885-1917*, New Delhi, 1983, p 270

86 Saroj Mukhopadhyay *op cit*

87 Interview with *Dhiren Majumdar*, Majumdar Participated in this Rally of working class

88 "*Confidential Report on the Political Situation in Bengal for the Second half of August, 1929*" Home Department (Political), Government of India, File No 17/29, (N A)

89 "*Confidential Report on the Political Situation in Bengal for the Second half of April, 1929*" Home Department (Political), Government of India, File No 17/29, (N A)

90 R C L I, Vol V, Pt II, P 61

91 Eric Hobsbawm *Labouring Men*, London, 1964 See "*British Gas Workers, 1873-1914*" P 166

92 Eric Hobsbawm *The Age of Revolution*, London, 1962, P 213 Also see Mick Jenkins *The General Strike of 1842*, London, 1980, passim

93 In each and every issue of *Karmi*, which was the organ of Employees' Association, the issue of tram strikes was widely covered and tramwaymen received tremendous support

94 Dipesh Chakrabarty *Communal Riot and Labour Bengal Jute Mill hands in 1890s* Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Occasional Paper No 11 For Chakraborty's views see D Chakraborty and Ranajit Das Gupta *Some Aspects of Labour History in Bengal in the 19th Century, Two Views* C S S S C Occasional Paper No 40

*ATUL SARMA**
*V.B. TULASIDHAR***

Limit to Non-Inflationary Deficit Spending

IN THE PLANNING process government expenditure has increased several-fold over the pre-plan level This expansion in government expenditure has been financed mostly by mobilising resources through tax and non tax sources, market borrowings and deficit financing defined in terms of money creation. These different sources of financing expenditure can be expected to have a differential impact on sectoral output and on the price level Financing through taxation involves withdrawal of purchasing power from the household sector and of investable resources from the corporate sector The inflationary impact, through the demand side, of this mode of finance depends on the net additional demand generated in different sectors by the combined influence of a withdrawal of funds and of government expenditure on the one hand and the availability of excess capacities in the affected sectors, on the other Besides, taxation may also lead to cost push inflation through forward shifting of taxes Similarly, mobilisation of funds through internal market borrowing may also lead to a crowding out of private funds owing to a liquidity crunch The effect of this mode of finance on sectoral output and inflation is difficult to determine Ideally, while examining the inflationary impact of increased government expenditure, the total effect of various modes of financing the expenditure should be considered along with the demand implication of the expenditure programmes In this paper, however, we have taken up the limited issue of price effects of one of the modes of financing additional governemnt expenditure, namely deficit financing We examine this issue with reference to the Union Government expenditure for 1971-72 in the inter-industry consistency framework

It is widely held that deficit financing as a source of financing government expenditure invariably leads to inflation through generation of excess demand In contrast to this widely held view, we have argued that an increase in government expenditure financed through deficit financing need not necessarily lead to inflation in an economy like India's where several manufacturing sectors are known to be characterised by excess capacity and that it can happen only if there is non-compatability between the composi-

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tion of sectoral demand generated directly and indirectly by an increase in government expenditure, and the structure of the excess capacity obtaining in the economy. We have attempted here, to indicate empirically the level to which deficit spending can be pushed up without causing inflation and also to identify the sectors through which inflation gains its momentum. For our exposition we have divided the paper into three sections. In the immediately following section we briefly discuss the data and the methodology used for the exercise. In section 2, we discuss the results of the study. In the final section we highlight the major conclusions and attempt to relate them, to the extent possible, to more recent time situation .

I

To carry out this exercise we require to know the structure of sectoral direct demand generated by the Union Government expenditure. Given the direct demand, we have to estimate the induced demand generated in the

TABLE I

Direct Commodity Requirement of Union Government Expenditure of Rs. 100 (At producers' prices)

Sector No.	Name	Commodity Purchases	Salary Disbursals	Combined Expenditure
1	Agriculture	2 512	38 784	16.836
2	Mining	4.608	0.419	2.953
3.	Food Products	1.356	12.982	5.947
4	Textile Products	3.629	4.971	4.160
5	Wood Products	0 076	0.342	0.180
6.	Paper & Printing	0.995	0 644	0.856
7.	Leather Products	0 075	0.319	0 172
8.	Rubber & Petro Products	2.758	0.807	1 988
9.	Chemicals	1 456	1.391	1.430
10.	Non-metalic Minerals	0.173	0.284	0.217
11.	Metals & Metal Products	3.366	0.419	2.202
12	Non Electrical Machinery	4.410	0.137	2.723
13	Electrical Machinery	6.833	1.027	4 541
14	Transport Equipment	18.261	1.246	11.541
15	Other Industries	4.831	1.568	3.543
16.	Electricity	2.366	1.694	2.096
17	Construction	27.135	6 665	19.051
18	Rly. Transport	9.067	3.373	6.819
19	Other Transport	1.701	2.655	2.078
20	Other Services	4.390	20.281	10.666
		100.0	100.0	100.0

Leontief-Keynesian propagation processes so as to examine the excess demand implications of the direct plus induced demand on different sectors. In order to do this, we need to ascertain the structure of excess capacities in different sectors. The data and the methodology used for making these estimates are discussed below.

It should be noted at the outset that we have used for estimates of the sectoral composition of the Union Government expenditure on commodity purchases and salary disbursal for the financial year 1971-72[1]. The composition of government demand as shown in terms of the distribution of the government expenditure of Rs. 100 each on commodity purchases and salary disbursals over 20 sectors is shown in Table 1.

Then we have estimated the total sectoral—direct and indirect—requirements of the commodity purchases and salary disbursals separately using a semi-closed input-output model with a condensed 20 sector version of the Fifth Plan domestic matrin as its core.[2] Our model while endogenising consumption incoporates the rural-urban differences in income propagation across sectors and relates them to consumption behaviour observed in respective areas. As a result of this, the derived consumption becomes sensitive to areawise income distribution[3] The total sectoral—direct plus induced-demand generated by a government expenditure of Rs. 100 on commodities or salary disbursals or on both in each of the 20 sectors has been estimated and the results are given in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that the level and the patterns of direct and induced sectoral demand requirement is very much different for the commodity and salary components of the government expenditure. Although both the components of the combined expenditure generate the maximum amount of total demand in the agriculture sector, salary disbursals generate almost twice as much as the amount of demand generated by commodity purchases. A given expenditure on these two components generates more or less the same amount of demand in Textiles, Wood products, Paper products, Chemicals, Electricity and other transport. Thus the demand pressure on these sectors will be the same for any compositional changes between commodity purchases and salary disbursals. Commodity purchases generate substantially more demand in Rubber and Petroleum products, Non-Metalic minerals, Metal products, Non-electrical and Electrical machinery, Transport equipment and Railway transport sectors, which in turn means that any expenditure on programmes involving relatively less salary payments puts pressure on the above sectors as compared to programmes involving substantial amount of salary payments such as social services. The direct plus induced demand pattern of the combined expenditure reflect the weighted average of commodity purchases and salary disbursals observed in 1971-72.

Having estimated the structure of the total sectoral requirement, we have to get the structure of excess capacities for the same year. For the manufacturing sectors, we have used the information on excess capacities estimated in one recent study[4] for the year 1971-72. There estimates have

TABLE II
Direct plus induced sectoral demand requirement of Union Government Expenditure of Rupees 100

Sector No	Name	Commodity Purchases (Rs)	Salary Disbursals (Rs)	Combined Expenditure (Rs)
1	Agriculture	70.24		--
2	Mining	8.39	3.32	6.57
3	Food Products	20.79	39.20	28.08
4	Textile Products	21.01	28.53	24.32
5	Wood Products	2.15	2.86	2.54
6	Paper & Printing	[illegible].28	3.08	3.23
7	Leather Products	0.61	0.97	0.72
8	Rubber & Petro Products	10.96	5.55	8.77
9	Chemicals	11.19	12.13	11.73
10	Non metalic Minerals	7.03	1.67	6.29
11	Metals & Metal Products	20.09	8.55	15.51
12	Non Electrical Machinery	5.25	0.49	3.35
13	Electrical Machinery	11.06	3.97	8.26
14	Transport Equipment	25.75	1.29	17.31
15	Other Industries	7.10	4.19	17.31
16	Electricity	9.93	8.70	9.47
17	Construction	35.81	16.71	28.38
18	Rly. Transport	16.11	11.16	14.32
19	Other Transport	9.30	10.39	9.76
20	Other Services	56.24	80.51	65.83
		362.0	402.4	377.9

been made using the peak-output method. As is well known, the estimates made on the basis of this method are generally on the lower side. For most of the non manufacturing sectors, the concept of excess capacity as understood in the manufacturing sectors is not applicable. But it is to be recognised that the output of non-manufacturing sectors cannot be expanded beyond a particular limit at least in the short run. Keeping this in view, we have defined the 'available capacity' in each of these sectors as their base (1971-72) level output multiplied by their respective observed annual average growth rates during 1970-76. This definition has a limitation particularly when applied to agriculture where the output depends on random factors and fluctuates violently.

The sectoral gross output data for non-manufacturing sectors are available only for the year 1973-74[5]. On the basis of the data we have estimated the

base year (1971-72) output for Agriculture, Mining and Electricity sectors using the output deflators given by RBI[6] and for Construction, Railway transport, Other transport and other services using the average annual growth rates for the period 1970-76 given in one study[7]. The available capacity thus estimated along with the excess capacities in manufacturing sectors as estimated in the study referred to are presented in Table 3

TABLE III

Sectoral Excess capacities 1971-72

		Gross output in 1971-72 (Rs million)	Growth rate **	Excess/available capacity 1971-72 (Rs million)
1	Agriculture	258098.1	2.91	7510.6*
2	Mining	5271.7	1.09	215.6**
3	Food Products			6620.5+
4	Textiles	–	-	6620.5+
5	Wood Products			180.5+
6	Paper & Printing	-		101.8+
7	Leather Products			258.1+
8	Rubber Products	-		1540.9+
9	Chemical	–	-	5065.1+
10	Non-metallic minerals	–	-	392.1+
11	Metals and Metal Products		—	1836.6+
12	Non-electrical machinery	—	-	1753.2+
13	Electrical Machinery	—	-	1588.9+
14	Trans Equipment	-	-	5007.7+
15	Other Industries	--	-	181.9+
16	Electricity	9338.3	3.52	328.7**
17	Construction	16580.3	2.11	982.8*
18	Rly Transport	11191.2	3.68	111.8**
19	Other Transport	13429.2	4.87	651.0*
20	Other Services	118726	2.41	2873.2**

Source * Estimated See text
\+ Jayashree Shah see footnote 4
** Bakul H Dholakia see footnote 7

It can be argued that the limit to non-inflationary spending is set by the extent of imbalance in the structure of the excess capacity levels of different sectors in relation to the demand pattern generated by a given level of deficit spending and the availability of foreing exchange. When the level of deficit spending on commodity purchases or on salary disbursals or on both is raised, one or more of the sector's output may reach full capacity level and

sectors, the excess demand generated in these sectors through deficit spending can be eased out by imports if one assumes away the bottleneck of foreign exchange. But this policy option gets closed as soon as the capacity limit of some of the non-tradable goods sectors such as Electricity, Railway transport etc. is reached thereby putting a severe constraint on the expansion of output In other words, the capacity levels of non-tradable sectors sets the limit for non-inflationary deficit spending unless the excess demand in these sectors is met by expanding their outputs.

In order to ascertain the stage at which each of the sectors becomes critical, additional total government expenditure necessary to achieve full capacity utilization in the respective sectors has been estimated separately for expenditure on commodity purchases, salary disbursals and both combined in the following manner.

$$\sum_j z_{ij} g_j = k_i$$

Denoting the elements of Leontiff inverse of the semi-closed model by z_{ij} and the proportion of government expenditure on the jth sectors as g_j we get where k_i is the direct plus induced demand generated by a rupee of a particular type of government expenditure in the ith sector. If X_i is the excess capacity available in the ith sector, where G_i^* gives the additional total government expenditure necessary to achieve full capacity utilization in the i-th sector. Separate estimates of G_i^* for additional government expenditure on commodities, on salaries and both combined are presented in Table 4.

$$X_i/K_i = G^*_i$$

II

As indicated in the preceding paragraph, we have estimated the level of additional government expenditure on commodity purchases, or on salary disbursals on or both combined that will be required to reach the full capacity level of a sector. The results that are presented in Table 4 show that the capacity levels of different sectors are attained at varying levels of additional government expenditure. For example, the full capacity limit of Railway transport is reached at Rs. 255.1 crore of additional government expenditure if it is entirely made on commodity purchases and at Rs. 359.3 core if it is expended on salary disbursals. On the other hand, the capacity level of Nonelectrical machinery sector is attained at a very high level of additional government expenditure (Rs. 9054 crore) if it is entirely made on commodity purchases and Rs. 14189 crore when both commodity purchases and salary disburals are taken together (combined expenditure). This range of variations in additional government expenditure required to reach the capacity levels of the different sectors clearly indicates the extent of imbalance in the pattern of government dem[illegible]

TABLE IV
Level of government expenditure require to completely utilise the excess capacity in different sectors (Rupees Crores)

Sector No	Name	Commodity purchases	Salary Disbursals	Combined Expenditure
1	Agriculture	959 9	491 6	696 8
2	Mining	257 0	649 5	338 5
3	Food Products	3184 5	1688 9	2357 7
4	Textile Products	4157 7	3066 2	3497 0
5	Wood Products	736 7	631 1	710 6
6	Paper & Printing	1234.1	1314 3	1253 3
7	Leather Products	4236 1	2663 9	3588.9
8	Rubber & Petro Products	1405 9	2776.4	1757 0
9	Chemicals	4409 5	4175 9	4318 3
10	Non-Metal Products	557 8	849 6	623 4
11.	Metals & Metals Products	2407 5	5656.8	3118 4
12.	Non-Elect. Machinery	9053 7	97004 1	14188 4
13	Electrical Machinery	1436 6	4002 2	1923 6
14.	Transport charges	1944.7	11673 0	2893 0
15.	Other industries	683.0	1157.3	815 0
16.	Electricity	331 0	377 8	347 1
17.	Construction	273.4	587.1	346 3
18.	Railway Transport	255.1	359.3	287 6
19	Other Transport	703 2	629 5	670.1
20.	Other Services	510.9	356 9	436.5

capacities. More important, the capacity limits of the non-tradable sectors such as Railway transport, Electricity and Construction are reached at a fairly low level of additional government expenditure, no matter whether it is entirely expended on commodity purchases or on salary disbursals.

Among the tradable sectors, Mining and Nonmetalic mineral proudcts in the case of commodity purchases and Agriculture in the case of salary disbursals reach critical levels at a moderate level of additional expenditure. In most of the remaining sectors, almost unattainable additional government expenditure is required to reach full capacity levels. It means that these sectors on their own may not face an excess demand situation with the expansion of government expenditure.

Given this scenerio, non-inflationary expansion of government spending through deficit financing is feasible only if the available capacity of the non-tradable sectors can be increased over and above the growth rates implicit in our capacity estimates. In addition, foreign exchange should be

tors, and also to meet induced import demana generated by addi government expenditure.[5] *We examine these issues below postulatin incremental percentage change in combined commodity and s expenditure.*

The excess demand generated in different sectors by different levels additional spending expressed as a percentage of the total governme expenditure in 1971-72 and the growth rates and foreign exchange needed overcome the excess demand are shown in Table 5. The table shows th none of the sectors becomes critical upto 4 per cent of additional spendin made over and above the 1971-72 levels of the Union Government spending Railways emerged as a constraining sector at 5 per cent level of addition expenditure, which can be overcome if its output growth is pegged to 4.2 per cent At this level, the foreign exchange requirement to meet induce import demand works out at Rs 27.5 crore.

Three more sectors viz. Mining, Electricity and Construction becom critical at 6 per cent level of additional expenditure Two of them are non excess demand in nontradable sectors, work out at 5 15 per cent for Railwa transport, 4 08 per cent for Electricity and 2 15 per cent for Construction and the foreign exchange requirement for direct and induced impor demand is Rs. 37 crore Similarly, with an increase of additional expenditur going up to 7 per cent of the combined government expenditure, Service sectors also faces excess demand situation in addition to the four othe sectors – three non-tradable and on tradable goods sector which face an excess demand at a lower percentage growth of additional expenditure In short, as the additional expenditure, as a percentage of the combined government expenditure, increases new sectors get added to the list of con straining sectors and higher rates of growth of non-tradables become necessary to meet the excess demand while more imports are required to ease out the excess demand for tradable goods sectors. In fact, when the expenditure is increased by 12 per cent of the base period expenditure level as many as nine sectors –five non-tradable and four tradable goods sector including Agriculture-face the prospect of excess demand necessitating growth of output in the range of 6 per cent, for Services, to 10 per cent, fo Railway transport sector. The direct and induced import requirements stand at Rs 226 crore as compared to Rs. 77 crore at 10 per cent level o additional expenditure

III

The major conclusions that emerge from the foregoing analysis are a follows . Given the pattern of government expenditure, the structure of the Indian economy and that of excess capacities of different sectors as obtained in 1971-72, deficit spending up to a level of 4 per cent of Union Governemn expenditure in the base year does not release inflationary pressure through the generation of excess demand for any of the sectors in the economy. In thi range of deficit spending, the foreign exchange requirement for easing ou

Identi[illegible]
rates of increase in additional Government Expenditure on Commodities and Salaries Combined

Additional Expenditure as a % of Central Government Expenditure* (1971-72)	Critical Sectors	Excess Demand in non-tradables Rs. Crores	Growth rate required to overcome the excess demand	Excess demand in tradable goods Rs Crores	Induced Foreign exchange requirement Rs Crores	Total Foreign exchange requirement Rs Crores
1.	Nil	——	——	——	5.5	5 5
3.	Nil	——	——	——	16.5	16.5
4.	Nil	——	——	——	22.0	22.0
5.	Railways	6 8	4.29	——	27 5	27 5
6.	Railways	16.5	5 15	——	——	——
	Mining	——	——	4 0	33.0	37.0
	Electricity	5 3	4.08	——	——	——
	Construction	16 1	2.45	——	——	——
7.	Railways	26 1	6 01	——	38 5	46 7
	Mining	——	——	8.2	——	——
	Electricity	11 7	4.77	——	——	——
	Construction	35 1	2 86	——	——	——
	Services	154 4	3 72	——	——	——
10.	Railways	84 9	8 59	——	55.0	79 1
	Mining	——	——	21.0	——	——
	Electricity	30 7	6.80	——	——	——
	Construction	92 2	4 08	——	——	——
	Services	154 4	3 72	——	——	——
	Non-Metalic Minerals	——	——	3 0	——	——
12	Railways	74.1	10 3	——	66 0	226 3
	Mining	——	——	29 7	——	——
	Electricity	13 4	8 17	——	——	——
	Construction	130 3	4 90	——	——	——
	Services	242 8	4 46	——	——	——
	Non-metalic Minerals	——	——	11 4	——	——
	Other Transport	13 2	5 85	——	——	——
	Agriculture	——	——	116.3	——	——
	Wood products	——	——	2 4	——	——

*The total Central Government Expenditure net of transf[illegible]

excess demand in the two tradable sectors is not of a high order. Therefore, the inflationary pressures on the economy critically depend on our ability to raise the rate of growth of output of the non tradable sectors, particularly Railway transport and Electricity. Deficit spending beyond 10 per cent generates excess demand in Agriculture because of which the foreign exchange requirement shoots up substantially. More important, the growth rates required to meet the excess demand in non-tradable sectors seem too high to be achieved.

The final question is what type of inference can we draw for the present day situation on the basis of the above results ? In the period subsequent to our period of reference, the Union Government expenditure net of tranfers. has increased roughly 1.4 times in real terms. Any percentage increase at this higher level of government expenditure implies a much larger real deficit than we have postulated in our excercise. Similarly, the economy must have been better integrated in the intervening period and therefore sectoral multipliers (Our K_i in Section I) for a given composition of government expenditure will be higher which in turn mean that the additional expenditure required (Our G_i^* in Section I) to reach the full capacity level in different sectors will be correspondingly lower than what we have estimated in our exercise. This should be viewed in the following context. Although the capacity of different sectors must have been raised in the intervening period, the level and the structure of excess capacity as worked out for four broad sectors viz. Basic Goods, Capital goods, Intermediate goods and Consumer goods have remained remarkably stable between 1971-80[9]. The composition of government expenditure, at least the part relating to commodity purchases, might have been changed. However, one does not expect drastic changes in the composition of government expenditure. To the exetent the present pattern of sectoral demand conforms to the one implicit in this excercise, a much lower percentage of deficit spending than what we have indicated is likely to generate inflationary pressure.

1 The sectoral composition of the expenditure on commodity purchases has been generated by scrutinising and shifting the data scattered over a large number of sources like (i) Detailed Demands for Grants, (ii) Directory of Government Purchases, (iii) Supplement to the Report by the Railway Board on Indian Railway etc But in the case of salary disbursals, there is no way of working out the commodity vector directly. This has been done indirectly by establishing a relationship between the salary distribution of the government employees and the consumer behaviour with the help of three parameter lognormal distribution. For further details see . Atul Sarma and V B. Tulasidhar, *Economic Impact of Government Expenditure*, Concept Publishing Co' New Delhi, 1984. Chapters 3 & 4.

2 The Fifth Plan Input matrix consists of 66 sectors. The coefficients are for 1973-74 at 1971-72 prices. The domestic coefficient matrix has been generated by deducting import coefficients matrix from the total coefficient matrix. These matrices are given in Annexure III of

the 'Technical Note' The domestic coefficient has been condensed to 20 sectors using the standard procedures of aggregation See, Government of India, *A Technical Note on the Approach to the Fifth Five Year Plan,* Planning Commission, New Delhi, 1973

3 We used the Leontief inverse matrix of the form (I-A-CV)-1 Where A is the domestic coefficient matrix, C is 20x2 matrix of marginal consumption coefficients and V is 2x20 matrix of value added coefficients For further details see V B Tulasidhar, *Impact Analysis of the Indian Union Government Expenditure in a Semi-Closed Input-Output Framework* Thesis submitted to the Gujarat University, 1983, Chapter III.

4 Javshree Shah, *Inter-Industry Variations in Capacity Utilization in Indian Industries A Time Series Analysis 1960-73,* (unpublished Ph D thesis) Gujarat University, 1981, Chapter III

5 A Technical Note, *op cit* Annexure III-i.

6 See the *Report on Currency and Finance* (Vol. II) 1976-77, Reserve Bank of India, Bombay, pp. 24 and 33.

7 See Bakul H. Dholakia, *Inter-Industry Linkages of Housing Investment in India, Working Paper No 301, Ahmedabad . Indian Institute of Management.*

8 *The induced import requirements have been worked out using the estimates of induced import requirements per unit of government expenditure made by V.B. Tulasidhar, op cit,* p. 320. For the combined (commodity plus salary) expenditure, it works out at Rs. 8.19 per Rs. 100 of additional expenditure.

9 The capacity ultilization ratios (per cent) are :

Sectors	1971-75	1980
Basic goods	77.4	77 2
Capital goods	60.2	62 4
Intermediate goods	79 7	82 5
Consumer goods	80 1	80.1

See I.J. Ahluwalia, *Industrial Growth in India,* Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1985, p 109

C.P. JEEVAN*

The Rise and Fall of the Space Shuttle

JANUARY 28, 1986 proved to be the blackest day in the history of human adventure into outer space. On this tragic day, all the seven crew members perished in the 25th space shuttle mission (Mission 51-L) and the 10th flight of the space shuttle *Challenger*. This single accident left as many dead as the total dead in all the previous space travel accidents.

The explosion was indeed a disaster for the entire humanity. What adds to its tragic dimensions is that millions of children, watching on TV a school teacher Christa McAuliffe lift off into space, saw everything end up in a fireball. A unique experiment was in the offing in which the teacher in outer space was to give lessons to her students on the planet Earth. In restrospect her words : "If the teacher in space doesn't come back to teach, something is wrong", holds an irony that no one can ignore. Her words were meant to assure her students that the newly acquired space fame would not keep her away from her students.

Space ventures have always had an element of uncertainty and risk. However, humanity had taken pride in this endeavor and had come to believe that every forseeable risk had been eliminated, every conceivable safety system incorporated and every possible accident scenario anticipated and eliminated. At least, that was the case till militarisation and commercialisation got the upper hand in space missions.

It is now left to the ashes of the shuttle crew to tell the tragic consequence of rapid militarisation and commercialisation of outer space. Hidden behind the triumphant story of shuttle flights, an all-time record of two dozen flights since 1981, is the not so widely known history of a space programme ridden with serious problems from its very outset. The manipulation by the powerful lobby of Aerospace industry and the US Space Administration ensured that those facts never got much attention in the mass media. But as one of the investigative reports put it, "the question was not whether a major disaster could befall the shuttle programme but of when."

The first launch of space shuttle—the Columbia mission of April 12, 1981—came after a series of delays, causing severe anxiety to the US Space Administration. However, the delay did not lead to an early reappraisal of the programme. This launch took place after the computer monitoring the launch stopped the launch several times.

Some facts are stranger than science fiction : once when the computer called a halt to the shuttle launch procedure, NASA tried to bypass the computer command. Fortunately, they were unsuccessful. The ship's oil had become contaminated and the oil filters, in two out of three auxiliary power units, had become clogged. This would have caused the jamming of the shuttle's hydraulic system that controls the landing gear. Malfunctioning of the landing gear would have led to a crash landing at a speed where nothing would be left to be salvaged.

What is indeed surprising is the haste with which the programme was made to proceed, although the first four flights, which were test flights, revealed that the shuttle performance, design and system components were far from satisfactory. Usually, manned launches are undertaken only after the system is perfected to the maximum possible extent and after sufficient test flights are carried out to evaluate performance

The widely known facts of the test flights show that the shuttle's insulating tiles fell off with unfailing regularity during launches, and communication channels with ground stations repeatedly failed. TV cameras malfunctioned too often, even the life support system was badly flawed and many wondered whether the shuttle was, a 'bankable' proposition. More serious, however, were the scores of problems with its rockets (the boosters in particular) and the fuel lines. The potential for a major mishap was not an unlikely event, but near certainty.

The principle hypothesis for the event relates to the defects in the booster. The Solid Rocket Boosters (SRB) consists of a pair of identically designed, 46 m tall and 4 meters wide rockets weighing 590,000 kg. They are made up of four main segments attached to each other by 177 steel pins.

On the fatal flight one of the segments was new; the others had flown previously. At the top of the boosters there is a nose containing the avionics and ignitor for the fuel, and at the other end, the rocket exhaust. On every shuttle mission, the two boosters supply about 3 million pounds of thrust, providing the power to propel the orbiter out of Earth's atmosphere On this ill fated 25th mission, the boosters and the *Challenger's* own liquid fuel engines were propelling into orbit the heaviest ever space cargo of all the shuttle missions. The *Challenger,* its fuel rockets and other equipment weighed 2 million kg. (40.5 m pounds) at launching. NASA was reluctant to disclose what the net weight of pay load is.

Shuttle's cryogenic liquid fuel rockets burn the highly volatile mix of liquid hydrogen and oxygen. The external fuel tank which holds this fuel is a kind of thermos flask containing 383,000 million gallons of liquid hydrogen at minus 217°C and 143,000 million gallons of liquid oxygen at minus 147°C. They are stored in separate compartments and is fed to the five shuttle rockets through 17 inch diameter aluminimum and steel piping.

At launch, orbiter's main engines are ignited to yield more than a million pounds of thrust. The shuttle with its external liquid fuel tank and SRBs begin the lift off, rocking into a tight arc. Then as it steadies itself,

Challenger's computers send the critical command igniting the SRBs. Each of them provide 2.9 million pounds more of thrust. With this the combination of shuttle (orbiter), the SRBs and the external fuel tank breaks loose from the launch pad and propels itself into space bound trajectory.

35 seconds into the flight, with the SRBs providing maximum thrust, the Challenger undergoes severe aerodynamic stress. The orbiter's liquid fuel rockets are then automatically throttled down to 65 per cent thrust. Seventeen seconds later, *Challenger's* on board computers, then throttles the engines once again to provide 104 per cent thrust. At this stage, the SRBs would have burned nearly a million pounds of fuel.

On the computer screens at the mission control everything looked perfectly normal : "*Challenger,* go at throttled up" the mission control signalled and mission pilot Michael J Smith responded : "Roger, go at throttle up". Moments later a fireball engulfed the orbiter and the crew was lost in an enormous explosion

If the mission had been successful, the solid fuel boosters would have burned for two minutes and 10 seconds before the shuttle commander jettisoned them They would have plunged into the sea at 150 km per hour. The impact at this speed destroys the nose cap and the avionics, but the steel segments of the casing survive to be recovered and re-used.

This time, the mission control had to destroy the boosters because one of the boosters was going out of control and heading towards a thickly populated part of Florida The self-destruct signal is common for both the boosters Destruction of the boosters also destroyed with it the crucial physical evidence of what was wrong with them.

The time when the flames were emerging from the solid rocket booster and licking the liquid fuel tank coincides with the stage of the lift off when the tank was subject to the greatest aerodynamic stress. At this stage, the shuttle is propelling through the densest part of the atmosphere and the air passing between boosters and tank as well as between shuttle and tank, is at very high temperature due to friction heating. To help cope with this aero-dynamic and thermal stress, the pilot throttles the shuttle engines down to 65% of its full power. At the time of explosion, the shuttle commander was about to increase the thrust back to full power, after completing thrust reduction manoeuvre. This is done about 72 seconds after the ignition of solid rockets. Whereas the flames were seen escaping only 14 seconds before the explosion, the unusual black plume appears immediately after ignition.

The Explosion Sequence

The television pictures showed an orange glow at the base of the shuttle's fuel tank, which then spread. A second fainter glow was also seen behind the tank. The film taken from the opposite side and released a week after the accident revealed the glow as a jet of flame from the ruptured right hand booster. The glow finally spread towards the liquid hydrogen tank.

According to *New Scientist,* the flame glowing like a blow torch [illegible]

the hydrogen tank, releasing hydrogen fuel. Hydrogen burns only slowly in air. That slowness, perhaps, explains why it took 14 seconds from the rupture of the hydrogen tank to the explosion. It appears that within this time gap, the flames would have burst the oxygen tank as well, producing intense heat as the hydrogen and oxygen mixed and combined explosively. From then on it would have taken only a fraction of a second for the fatal explosion.

If light weight sensors had been installed on the outside of the craft, computers could have easily spotted the leak and aborted the flight. The shuttle commander could have then got the time to jettison both the tank and boosters and begin RTLS, the code for Return to Launch Site abort. Alternatively, the solid boosters could have been dumped, thus removing the source of flames before they reached the oxygen line. In 1984, three Soviet cosmonauts on board a Soyuz flight were saved by the protection system which allowed them to jump out of the exploding rocket.

The absence of sensors was not the only flaw that plagued the shuttle programme. The Presidential Commission investigating the tragedy examined NASA's chain of command amid charges that the Space Administration had wilfully sacrificed safety and ignored warnings not to go ahead with the launch. Already the Commission had learned that the rocket experts at Morton Thiokol, which makes the boosters had, on the eve of the launch, unanimously opposed the launch only to be overruled by their own managers after NASA officials brought sufficient pressures to bear on them. NASA's managers interpreted the engineers' warning as only something of 'minor concern'.

Engineers reporting to the inquiry suspect the rubber rings inside the solid rocket boosters as the most likely cause of the accident. The committee has been told that technical experts were worried about the effect of cold weather such as the one prevailing on the morning of the flight, on the 'O' rings which ensures a perfect fit between the several panels that make up the walls of the booster.

The Morton-Thiokol experts had considered that the temperature of the solid fuel before launch should not drop below 4°C. Although there are no temperature gauges inside the fuel, NASA technicians had calculated the temperature of the booster fuel to be about 13°C. The air temperature at Cape Canaveral had, in fact, dropped to minus 2.2°C on the night before the launch.

There is also an opinion that the cold wind and chilly weather could have had very drastic effects on the booster. The scenario put forth is somewhat like this : The cold wind streams past one of the boosters directly facing the wind and gets slowed down. This stream of air then goes around the cold liquid fuel tanks holding the liquid hydrogen and oxygen, maintained at very low temparature, getting further cooled down in the process. This mass of air, cooled well below the air temperature, then goes past the second booster. This would, in turn, cause cooling of the second booster below the air temperature

above the danger level, the engineers at the Cape were worried because they had no precedent of a launch under such conditions. The officials from Morton Thiokol had informed NASA : the situation was "outside our experience base," recalls William Lucas, director of the manned space flight centre at Houston. The lowest temperature during any previous launches had been two weeks earlier when it dipped to 10.5°C. However, after further discussion, the expert opinion was overruled and managers from Morton Thiokol gave consent for the launch.

Behind the errors of judgement were strong commercial pressures. One report indicated that Morton Thiokol's contract for manufacturing boosters for shuttle was being negotiated. With an order for another 180 boosters at stake, NASA was for the first time considering other companies for competitive bids. Allan McDonald, an engineer from Morton Thiokol had told the members of the Congress that he wanted to postpone the flight, which had already been put off three times. He says that when he suggested this, NASA's booster manager at the Kennedy Space Center, Lawrence Mulloy, replied : "My God, Thiokol when do you want me to launch ? Next April ?"

McDonald cited the three year history of problems with rubber seals (the 'O' rings). NASA was told on January 27 that the rubber would lose its resilience and the seals would not seat properly if the temperature went below freezing. NASA was well aware of the seating deficiency, having been reminded by Thiokol on 19 August 1985 that there was a "high probability" that a second back-up O-ring would not work if called upon. Such a failure would cause leakage of burning fuel from the booster.

It is clear that NASA was too keen to meet a tight launching schedule and rushed ahead despite warnings. During hearings before the US Senate, officials from NASA acknowledged that there had been a potentially serious breakdown in the chain of consultations that precede each launch. During the morning of the flight, technicians had noticed ice on the gantry and on parts of the shuttle. NASA was concerned that shattering ice can damage the delicate tiles on the shuttle during lift-off

The members of the enquiry committee were in for another surprise when they were informed that engineers from Rockwell International had also warned the middle managers at NASA that they would not support a launch. They were concerned of the dangerous amounts of ice on the structure that supports the shuttle and its fuel tank. While icy conditions in itself was not unusual, the engineer could not predict what damage it might do when shaken loose during the shuttle's ascent. Rockwell, which makes the orbiters, was mainly concerned that shattering ice might break some of the delicate tiles that protect the orbiter from the heat of re-entry into Earth's atmosphere.

Rocco Petrone, an engineer with Rockwell, told NASA at about 09:00 hours on the morning of the launch that : "Rockwell cannot assure that it is safe to fly". NASA had already heard from Robert Glaysher, another Rockwell engineer that the team had too little [illegible]

launch. Glavsher said "We felt it was unsafe to fly." This was the first time that Rockwell has taken an 'unsafe-to-fly' position." Arnold Aldrich, the top shuttle engineer at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, maintains that Rockwell did not "ask or insist" that NASA cancel the flight. He and other NASA managers, like the NASA officials at the booster division, considered this to be of "minor concern". Although ice accumulation has yet not any direct bearing on the accident, the testimony is similar to Morton Thiokol's story and reveals NASA's eagerness to go ahead with the launch, taking unprecedented risks.

A stream of documents now brought before the public show that the shuttle programme was badly flawed. On 23 occasions, the seals suffered varying amounts of erosion during flight. NASA and Morton Thiokol were working out ways to improve their design on the day the *Challenger* took off.

On December 17, 1982, a propulsion expert at NASA warned in an internal memorandum that the shuttle and the crew would be lost should the seal system fail. Without a perfect seal, the fuel, burning at 3204°C, would burn and possibly melt the steel casing. The boosters' O-rings originally fell in the category of parts labelled "criticality-1R", meaning that nothing stood between their failure and probable destruction of the shuttle, but that redundancy was built in. NASA documents reveal that on February 3, 1983, it reclassified the O-rings to simply "criticality-1", meaning that the back up system might not work.

Engineers had noted that during the first second of ignition, the inboard arm of the joint rotated away from the other arm of the joint as the pressure of the burning fuel mounted. At that time the primary O-ring extrudes into the enlarged gap and fills it. But it was felt that the arm may twist so much that the O-ring comes loose and will not seat. Should the primary ring then fail, there would be no back up.

The O-ring were also subject to erosion. On 6 of the 171 main case joints examined from boosters recovered from past flights, hot gases had eroded the primary O-rings. On at least two occasions, hot gases had got past the primary O-ring and deposited soot on the secondary O-ring. And once, on 29 April 1985, the secondary O-ring was eroded, possibly because it was unseated during a pre-launch pressure test. Overall, O-rings were damaged or eroded on 13 of the first 24 shuttle flights.

Series of reports from NASA's propulsion division mentioned O-ring problem. Modifications were devised and by August 1985, Morton Thiokol had come up with 43 possibilities. Implementation would have required several months or even years. Meanwhile, NASA continued to fly shuttles under intense pressure to meet its goal of 24 flights per year by 1992. According to *The New York Times* many NASA engineers held their breath when shuttles were being lauched.

NASA pondered over the safety of the boosters when first building the craft in the 1970s. In 1978, the specialists hired by the agency to calculate probabilities of various accident scenarios, opined that danger of a serious accident was negligible. In December 1983, the US Airforce Weapons Laboratory decided to look again. Two of forthcoming shuttle payloads were to carry payloads with plutonium as power source and an explosion would spread radiation. The second analysis concluded that NASA had underestimated the risk factor by a factor of anything between 100 to 1000.

Congressman Edward Markey, who released the report, calculates that the real risk of a booster malfunctioning is 1 in 35 shuttle launches. That made an eventual accident "a virtual certainty", Markey said. Yet another serious allegation has come from a former NASA employee, Richard Cook. Cook's job was to calculate the cost of shuttle work each year. Cook wrote a memo to his superior, Michael Mann, on July 23, 1985 warning that the shuttle's safety was being "compromised".

Reducing Safety to Increase Payload

The solid fuel and oxidiser (to provide oxygen for burning) consist of a viscous mixture of aluminium powder, ammonium perchlorate, iron oxide and an epoxy binder. They are poured into the rocket casing and allowed to solidify. Right through the centre is a bore for the ignition to proceed and the hot gases to escape to the rocket exhausts. The steel casing is lined with insulating material (nitrile burtadiene rubber) that is designed to withstand high temperatures. It undergoes slow charring during flight. The design is such that when the fuel is fully expended, half of the protective insulation should remain.

Strapping solid rockets to liquid fuel rockets is a very risky proposition. In 1983, on the 3rd *Challenger* flight, the rocket nozzle at the base of an SRB "was within several seconds of a burn through", says David Winterholter, the acting chief of NASA's shuttle propulsion division in Washington *(News Week)*. Despite the dangers involved, the same year, NASA decided to reduce the weight of the rockets and enhance payload capacity. This was done by reducing the thickness of the SRB's steel casing. NASA was able to effect an increase in shuttles' payload capacity by about 700 pounds. Other modifications were also made to speed up the burn rate and increase thrust. Thus, a thinner SRB also made a burn through the casing easier.

In its drive for increasing payload capacity, changes were also made in the design of the external fuel tank. These modifications made the tank and its assembly lighter. It was claimed that this did not result in reducing the tank assembly's capacity to withstand the severe aerodynamic stresses. Reductions were also made in the thickness of the aluminium alloy shell of the external tank. After the first five flights, a weight reduction of 10,000 pounds was effected by making substantial changes. The changes included altering and removal of structural stiffners and stiffner rings as well as reduction of fuel tank thickness.

ulty Liquid Fuel Engines

The main engines were also not free of troubles During tests in 1970, several of them blew up. On the early shuttle missions, cracks had developed in the liquid hydrogen lines. The small, high speed turbo pumps, which generate 75,000 horse power and operating under high pressures at 35,000 revolutions per minute, were a source of constant trouble. Possibility of a broken blade from it hitting the fuel line or rupturing the tank was not unlikely. Only last year, NASA awarded a contract to the Aerojet Tech Systems Co., California to improve the turbo machinery.'

Military compulsions and cost economics had come to outweigh the scientific significance of shuttle flights. While, on one hand, the shuttle programme had become the workhorse of the 'Star Wars' (SDI) programme, it had also got to be made commercially viable by increasing the number of flights per year. A re-usable heavy duty craft was primarily a military requirement. However, when decisions to opt for the shuttle programme were being made in the 1970s, , the backdrop of Vietnam war made military considerations unpopular. While seeking funds for the programme, the US Congress was told that the shuttle would substantially reduce costs of space travel.

The scientific community, by and large, did not accord much credibility to such a claim. In fact, there was considerable opposition to the programme from top scientists. Even the director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Bruce Murray, argued that US science had no compelling reasons for opting for the immediate development of a reusable space vehicle. NASA promised that it can, with such a vehicle, put payloads into orbit at a cost as low as $ 100 per pound of payload. With unmanned one use vehicles, the costs were around $ 1000 per pound. However, the payload costs in the initial shuttle flights were around $ 1100 per pound for a full payload, with the US Government heavily subsidising the flights. Subsidies had to be resorted to because the European Space Agency was offering deployment of payloads through unmanned *Ariane* launches at much less cost. The actual cost per pound of payload without state subsidies on shuttles works out to be an enormous $ 4000. In order to make the shuttle cost effective, NASA had to chase a target of 30 flights per year on a budget of $ 2 billion.

According to *Aviation Week*, 14 shuttle missions were planned for 1986, of which 5 were to be flown on *Challenger* These payloads would now have to be traded off among *Columbia, Discovery and Atlantis* 19 missions were planned for 1987, with six of them on *Challenger* With the loss of *Challenger*, the programme would be drastically delayed and these delays would considerably push back the entire NASA programme.

Military programme has priority over the civilian programmes and the delays would prove to be fatal for the space research projects. Apart from the curtailment of shuttle flights due to loss of *Challenger*, the investigations into the disaster can lead to a reasonable reassessment of the programme causing drastic reduction in the frequency of launches. When this happens, given the

compulsions and strategic priorities of the Reagan administration, it is doubtful whether the space science projects would even get nominal importance in the re-structured programme.

Over a period, space research has come to have only secondary significance in the Shuttle programme. The reasons, of course, were obvious from the very beginning : the 30 tonne payload capacity of the shuttle was not required for any of the space research projects; it was undoubtedly a military requirement. None of the research projects envisaged a 30 tonne payload capacity. However, even with a large military component, the shuttle flights were more than half empty.

Militarisation

Over the next two years, shuttles launched from Cape Kennedy were scheduled to carry advanced missile early warning satellites, electronic intelligence statellites and Defence Satellite Communication payloads. Shuttle missions from the United States Air Force (USAF) base at Vandenberg were to introduce an improved imaging, reconissance satellite and carry out polar orbit research for the Air Force.

Loss of Challenger has caused the US Department of Defence (DOD) to review its options for high priority Strategic Defence Initiative (the SDI or the Star Wars) payloads. A series of high level consultations have begun after the explosion. These meetings at the Strategic Defence Initiative Organisation (SDIO) have had the participation of Secretary of Defence, Caspar Weinberger and Lt. Gen. James A Abraham, the SDIO Director. These discussions centre around the launcher requirements of the SDIO. The shuttle is indispensable for the SDIO experiments in 1987 and in 1992 when the Star Wars programme enters its development stage.

The SDIO has purchased the last three available McDonnell Douglas Delta launches to augment the payload capacity available on the shuttles. First Delta launch is scheduled for August 1986. Increased use of space shuttles by the USAF was sanctioned early last year under the provisions of the National Security Launch Strategy approved by the President. Apart from the increased use of shuttles, the USAF also requires expendable launchers to put into orbit three high priority DOD space systems.

In a statement to a Senate Sub-Committee, Edward C Aldrige, Under Secretary, USAF, has said that these three consist of Defence Support Programme Satellite (DSPS), Milstar hardened communications satellite and a classified system that he was not authorised to disclose. The USAF requirements of the shuttle flights was estimated at 9-12 payloads per year starting with the 1990s, *excluding* the needs of the SDI. This was revealed by the USAF Director of Space Systems and Command, Control and Communications, Brigadier General Donald J Kutyna at the hearings before the House Science & Technology Committee (*Aviation Week*, July '85).

Also in existence is an exclusive USAF shuttle programme based at Vandenberg Air Force base. Located on Southern California near Lompoe, the

Air Force spent $ 2.9 billion preparing the launch site for shuttle missions. The first exclusive USAF launch was set up for mid July 1986 and is likely to be upset by the accident. The space shuttle *Discovery* was viewed as a dedicated Vandenberg AFB orbiter.

Undaunted by the explosion, the USAF is continuing with its launch site and systems test schedule at Vandenberg in support of the planned launch of *Discovery* "We still have no official change in our launch schedule, and we're continuing to work towards a July 15 launch date", reports *Aviation Week* quoting USAF officials. According to these officials "until we hear otherwise, we'll continue our preparations (at Vandenberg)".

Hypergolic and cryogenic propellant system tests and an exhaust duct problems have already contributed to delays and snags in the schedule at Vandenberg. Even without the delay caused by the loss of *Challenger,* the USAF is faced with a stiff schedule to meet the mid July first flight date, and the second Vandenberg launch planned for December 1986.

The Air Force needs the high lift capacity of the shuttle and the Titan 34-D class expendable launchers to meet its heavy lift requirements. The recent explosion of a Titan rocket launched by the Air Force underscores the frantic pace at which DOD work is being done. The Titan rocket that exploded is, in fact, the alternative military payload booster for geo-synchronous orbit missions from late 1988.

The shuttle is to be used in November 1987 to put into orbit 10 NAVSTAR Global Positioning Satellite. In fact, three such satellites were on *Challenger* as part of mixed payloads. A major military mission on board the shuttle this year was to test Teal Ruby, an important component of Star Wars scheme. Teal Ruby is an infrared tracking system designed to look down towards Earth and locate aircraft. The shuttle was also to test other sensors. Later experiments were expected to carry lasers and telescopes to test their ability to track targets in and above the atmosphere.

Scientific Setbacks

For NASA, the year was to be "the Year of Science". Satellites were to probe polar regions of the Sun, study an asteroid and carry out observations on Jupiter. A US space based experiment called 'Astro' to observe comet Halley was also planned in early March. There was also the planned deployment in October 1986 of the much awaited Hubble Space Telescope. All These were to be carried on board *Columbia* and *Challenger*. All these scientific missions now face posponement.

Another work that is to suffer greatly is the work on building a space station. Two NASA missions planned for the year—Ulysses and Galileo, were to have been carried into space on board the shuttle. They were to be launched within a few days of each other, in mid May during a brief "launch window". The launch window is determined by the position of Jupiter. These conditions will not come around again until July 1987.

Ulysses, a joint mission of NASA and the European Space Agency,

would have explored the poles of the Sun and nearby interstellar space. Bo[th] Ulysses and Galileo were to have been sent deep into space by a modifie[d] Centaur rocket attached to the scientific payloads and launched from th[e] shuttles cargo by. The solar orbit of Ulysses was to have been achieved by using the gravitational field of Jupiter as a 'sling-shot'.

On the way to Jupiter, Galileo would have given scientists a close view of the asteroid-Amphitrite. Galileo is designed to orbit Jupiter for two years and to parachute scientific instruments into the planet's mystry atmosphere.

Biggest scientific casuality could be the Edwin P Hubble Space Telescope, one of the most elaborate scientific instruments ever to be designed. The project has already been delayed several times. The telescope costs more than $ 1.2 billion, and can probe far deeper into space than has ever been possible.

Commercial Setbacks

Commercialisation of the shuttle flights have also suffered setbacks that may not be possible to be reversed. According to Brad Meslin, the Executive Vice President at the Center for Space Policy, in Boston, space ventures requiring immediate financing may go "down the tubes", since the catastrophe is expected to have a chilling effect on space finance. Projects that would be delayed include a material processing experiment belonging to Boeing, Grumman and Rockwell and a polymer experiment planned by the 3M and General Motors.

The underwriters have had record losses, about $ 600 million, on space risks over the past two years. Underwriting of insurance policies covering shuttle flights would be frozen for several months, said Brian Stockwell, President of Corroon & Black Inspace, a leading broker in the US (*New Scientist*). If the shuttle programme remains grounded for about a year, many satellite owners would switch over to the European Space Agency's Ariane rocket for deployment. However, the Ariane programme is also not without difficulties and is running 6 months behind schedule, since the failure of Ariane V15 in September 1985.

NASA had plans to launch 6 communication satellites in 1986 and 8 in 1987. Many of these, including two of the Ministry of Defence, UK would also be delayed. Other satellites facing delays belong to India, Indonesia, Intelsat, GTE, Western Union, Hughes, American Satellite Business Systems and the RCA.

Explosion of a Myth

The myth that was sought to be foisted on the American psyche that space weapons and the SDI (the Star Wars programme) would make USA safe has been badly exploded with the shuttle tragedy. If the teacher in space has not come back to teach, the reasons for what went wrong are not far to seek. She was simply the victim of a dangerously misconcieved strategic programme. The fire ball in Florida sky proved that there cannot be even a fool proof

space launch let alone a super sophisticated fail proof and invulnerable space weapons system. If the mission control computers could not sense the fate of the shuttle crew when orange flames were licking the liquid hydrogen fuel tanks, can SDI save the American crew of the space ship Earth when the American ICBMs start on their doomsday trajectories to 'win' a nuclear war? The lesson from the Florida sky was, if anything the explosion of the Star Wars myth. While paying tributes to the seven heroes of *Challenger*, let us hope that the lesson is not lost on anyone.

Language As Ideology

VEENA DAS (ed.) *THE WORD AND THE WORLD : Fantasy, Symbol and Record*, Sage Publications, 1986, pp. 218.

LANGUAGE, or as the authors of this book put it, the word, has a complex role to play in the science of man. Engels, in his seminal work, *The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man,* written in 1876 and first published in 1896, has this to say : "Mastery over nature began with the development of the hand, with labour, and widened man's horizon at every new advance. He was continually discovering new, hitherto unknown, properties in natural objects. On the other hand, the development of labour necessarily helped to bring the members of society closer together by increasing cases of mutual support and joint activity, and by making clear the advantage of this joint activity to each individual... First labour, after it and then with it speech— these were the two most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man."[1] This highlights two aspects of language : *its developmental grasp over reality and its use as ideology.* Any stress on the one without the other will lead to partial or faulty conclusions, as we shall see

The traditional anthropological approach, from which the editors of this volume and many of the contributors are unable to escape, ignores the importance of a *historical perspective* in sifting out elements of a growing developmental grasp from merely ideologically, giving new solutions for problems faced by society. This is evident, when the introduction to this volume states : "This volume lies at the intersection of life and the word, recognising the transient quality of both and acknowledging the inherent plurality through which words are made and re-made."[2]

This also is an important class perspective, for, "almost the whole (of) ideology amounts either to a distorted interpretation of this history or to a complete abstraction from it. Ideology is itself only one of the aspects of this history "[3] Thus, the shifts and distortions that take place, the contradictory ideologies that coexist and the over-arching solutions that are imposed on society reflect class struggle and the interests of the ruling classes parading as the ruling ideology, whose limitations, distortions from reality and transformations are necessarily ephemeral. To acknowledge that as "words are made and remade" existentially is essentially to deny the historical perspective that alone shows how ephemeral they are and points to more durable perspectives, where historically, the rule of the exploiting classes has broken down in

many countries of the world with the establishment of socialist society, giving even - ideological production a new role free from the distortions necessitated by exploitative societies that preceded it.

What then are the insights that Western-oriented anthropology offers us ? Being ahistorical, the conclusions are necessarily partial But still, it is interesting to see which avenues of research are developed and which are ignored. Let us start with Pocock's : *Art and Theology in the Bhagavata Purana*.

First, in the creation of a mythology, time the irreversible and constantly moving on, must be done away with : in other words, *an ahistorical perspective* is called for, a perspective that is achieved by "an elaborate mathematics which, through its speciously precise conversion tables, presents the ancestors, gods, Bramha and finally the Supreme Being as existing in incalculable and increasingly greater units of time. Human time, therefore, although proceeding at a rate faster than the divine time (s) is not qualitatively different.... However, it is less real than divine time and we have seen how the conversion of one into the other underlines the relative realities."[4] And this relativism too, is negated through the doctrine of rebirth (*samsara*), which dissolves various sequential identities into one, so that each appears to be no more than a mask of a reality belonging to a sequence of time other than that of the perceived world. Then, "at the end of 1000 *catur yuga*, one day of Brahma for a *Kalpa* elapses. Then the flames from the mouth of Shesha destroy all the worlds and Brahma sleeps on Shesha for another *Kalpa* until the work of creation is renewed."[5] At the same time, while the progression of time is from good to evil, *in general*, the Bhagavata overcomes this contradiction by allowing individual release from the coils of *Kaliyuga* through *bhakti*, not so rare a ploy, as all religions place faith above perception and the logical conclusions derived from it.

What is striking here is the closeness of this ahistorical ideological perspective of early medieval Hindu thought to that of our anthropologists, whereas the Hindu theologians see the destruction of old worlds and creation of new ones through the concept of *pralaya*, our anthropologists see worlds made and remade after periods of social breakdown that Durkheim called *anomie*. And we shall see later what purpose this serves.

We see also in Pocock's analysis how this timelessness allows the fusion and radical alteration of realities. These are assured by metaphoric inclusion of *twin personalities* like Krishna-Balarama, and then, by a series of metonymic introductions to Krishna-Rama, and finally, Krishna-Arjuna, with Balarama having lost his superior status and becoming secondary to Krishna.[6] Moreover, in some ways Pocock fits the facts into the schema, for Arjuna, after Krishna's death, becomes the protector of the Yadus who survive, and appoints Parikshit, his great-grandson to rule over them, in a sense, redressing the balance between Balarama and Krishna. But all this still does not answer the question why these gods have to be integrated in this fashion.

the microcosm or the mocrocosm is an illusion; only the self-knowing atman truly exists, free of cycle or sequence."[8] *This still fails to explain why such a long-winded exercise is needed to incorporate the Yadu-hero Krishna into the pantheon at a level higher even than Rama, who becomes Arjuna at the tail end of the Purana.*

D D Kosambi, over twenty years ago, in 1964, dealt with this question quite differently when he explained the *puranas* as the basis of primitive class and state formation among people who had previously been independent, egalitarian tribes legitimised by a priestly class, very often at the cost of independent Kshatriya republics. Krishna's genesis is seen in the same perspective, he notes how "a great deal of doctrine later palmed off in Krishna's name was surreptitiously borrowed from Buddhism; as for that matter were some epithets (*Bhagavata, Narottama, Purushottama*). Where the Buddha was an historical figure, it is difficult to find anything historical about any of the numerous Krishnas whose myths ad legends coalesced to form the dark all-god .. . The whole Krishna saga is a magnificent example of what a true believer can manage to swallow, a perfect setting of opportunism for the specious arguments of the *Gita*. It reflects the relationship between a highly complex society with a relatively primitive level of production and its religion."[9]

What, fundamentally, was the social role of Buddhism now borrowed by the Krishna cult ? It developed out of a crumbling society : "The Buddha accepted the new social requirement in which debtors and slaves could not run away from their obligations, animals could no longer be killed indiscriminately, and private property could not be appropriated. Ability to pay taxes was considered by the Buddha as one of the five fruits of wealth... And at the same time he offered to the oppressed peoples of his times a suitable *illusion* of ancient tribal communism which was already trampled and undermined *in reality*. In fact, the Buddha had to act as an unconscious tool of history, and it was not possible for him, though he understood the problem fully well, to change the course of historical transformation and re-establish the pre-class society once again. Class Society, inspite of all its ugliness was a historical necessity, and what the Buddha could do under such a condition was to boost up some of its progressive features in public life and to rescue some of the beneficial aspects of tribal life in a class society."[10]

In fact, this is precisely what the Krishna legend does, and his multiple affairs with the *gopis* and encounters with tribal mother-goddesses are loved by the general public as it offers them an illusion of the easy interpersonal relations obtaining in egalitarian societies. But this is only one aspect of the question. The other aspect is that through the association with this egalitarian ideal, an individual relation of *submission* is built-up, which is described by Kakar in his paper, *Erotic Fantasy : the Secret Passion of Radha and Krishna*, as follows : "Krishna's erotic homage to Radha conveys something of the aching quality of man's fantasy of surrender at the height of sexual excitement."[11] But there is more than mere fantasy to it, for we are told : "In the *bhakti* cults, where the worshipper must create

Krishna, the transcendence of the boundaries of gender becomes imperative for the male devotee, who endeavours to behave like a woman in relation to the Lord."[12] The fundamental thing here is that in the transition from one form of exploitative society to another, or in the case of social "safety-valves," the concept of *liberation through submission* takes the place of *liberation through struggle*, the genuinely revolutionary solution But this aspect of the Gita Govinda and the Krishna cult remains unexplored on account of the perspective of the author, as well as the diversionary role of Krishna cults today when social discontent has perfectly valid revolutionary channels of expression available to it.

It still remains to be explained why Buddhism, very much a social revolt, does not survive, and the Krishna cult takes its place. The answer ultimately lies in the limits of the productive processes at work behind these myths and ideologies. Their basis was the development of an early stage of the caste system with food production upto 700 B C "under which the fruits of labour could be expropriated without slavery;" and later, this expanded southwards "backed by the highly developed northern society with its advanced techniques; in particular, *a recently acquired knowledge of metals*. The new territory was far more varied and not to be settled in the same way as the northern Hence the further development and new function of caste, where the Brahmin would write *puranas* to make aboriginal rites respectable, while the savage chiefs of the tribe would turn into Kings and nobles ruling over the tribe This was really the formation of new classes under external stimulus, whereas the older northern caste system had first developed as a class-structure from within the tribe."[13] The first of these stages corresponds to the supremacy of the plough-bearing Balarama, the second to the iron-bearing and death-dealing inventions of the northern states brought in by brahmanical advisors, after the victory of the kingdoms Kasi and Kosala over the tribal republics.

Thus, while Buddhism reflected the autonomous transformation of tribal society into states and classes, the later process as the *puranic* inflations indicate, merely developed a method of coexisting with primitive socio-economic formations in the narrow self-interest of brahmanical priests and the tribal aristocracies they sought to liberate from the mass of tribesmen, without necessarily advancing the productive forces as had happened in the initial stages in the North. For this, the supernatural figure of Krishna, with his pragmatic capacity to integrate the tribal mother-goddess cults, was a far better choice than the arid philosopher who preached non-violence and austerity. And so, Krishna took on the mantle of the Buddha, and the critical spirit of the Buddha was replaced by submission to the deity

The position of Kasi too, is to be seen in this perspective. Eck, in her paper on *Banaras : Cosmos and Paradise in the Hindu Imagination*, analyses the *Kasi Khanda*, which she sees as "a narrative context in which Kashi is 'constructed' in the imagination, through one story after another."[14] playing with the spatial dimension just as in the *Bhagavata Purana* the temporal aspect

is utilised. But, essentially, the effort is the same : to come to terms with unpleasant class realities by recreating an illusion of primaeval egalitarianism. In the Kasi myth too, the space of Kasi is presented not as what it is, but as "*Anandavana* or *Ananda Kanana*—the Forest of Bliss. While investigating Kashi in the Hindu imagination, we must recognise the fact that, to a great extent, it is not mentally fashioned as a city at all, but as a forest. In it, "there is no *kama*, no instinctive passion....no *Krodha*, natural enmity,"[15] so there is no question of rebirth so necessary to maintain the inegalitarian caste society that had emerged. Kasi thus became the living symbol of the egalitarian illusion.

And yet, behind this benign illusion, even Eck notes, "there is one clear and visible indicator of Kasi's transcendent quality, however, and that is the role of death in the life of the city."[16] Though from an ahistorical perspective, Eck sees only '*moksa*' or liberation from the cycle of transmigration, Kosambi points to a far deeper connexion that Kasi had with the death of egalitarian, symbiotic tribal society. Kosambi, for example, notes a cave drawing of 800 B.C. in Mirzapur district, showing "a charioteer attacking the aborigines (who drew the picture) with.....a discus.... The charioteers would be aryans exoloring the region across the river for iron ore." around "the time when the first settlement at Banaras was founded."[17] Thus, the connection of Kasi with iron-mining and with iron as the death-dealing metal (Krishna too is killed with an iron-tipped arrow) was probably its first reason for pre-eminence. However, Kasi was soon to be conquered by Kosala, and once its real pre-eminence was gone, a mythical character had to be created for it. Why this survived to become so central to Hinduism can only be explained historically and not structurally.

The history of the process shows it was of extremely limited value to the development of productive forces. Kosambi notes how, for Hindu culture, . "The melting-pot was the Delhi-Meerut-Mathura area, at a time when metals, especially iron, were known but in short supply Late Vedic Aryans, Naga food-gatherers of the forested divide, and Krishna's neovedic cattle-herders could together form a more efficient food producing society if only they stopped fighting each other. The environment and shortage of metals made it impossible for anyone of the three to subdue the others by naked force. So the myths had to coalesce. Recombination of the human elements was helped by the Kasyapas; the editing of legends was done by another Brahmin class, the Bhrigus. The mutual acculturation was so effective that the *Mahabharata* continued to be inflated and the *Puranas* rewritten on the same model throughout the medieval period. *The process failed only when grouping people together on the basis of joint superstition could no longer help to create a more productive society.* This failure was made patent by the relative ease of the Muslim conquest."[18] Thus, where the anthropologist, from the perspective of the ideologist, sees a successful literary effort, the historian notes the bleak conditions that gave it primacy, and how, ultimately, it failed to build an enduring reality around itself-as it was never meant to anyway-but became merely a mechanism of a narrow class of brahmins to earn a parasitic living as second-

class citizens in a state ruled by a foreign elite.

This is brought home even more clearly in Anuradha Kapur's paper on *Actors, Pilgrims, Kings and Gods The Ram Lila at Ram Nagar,* largely because the author has touched on certain historical realities that highlight the non-deterministic role played by the ideologist, except on the existential and ephemeral level, first in a colonial state and then in a 'secular' Republic, both of whom patronized local ritual as they failed to eradicate the semi-feudal relations that still characterise rural India

The Ramnagar *Ramlila*, it is said, began in 1825, but its formalisation as a ritual took place in the period of 1835-1889, when Ishwari Prashad Narain Singh was Maharaja, that is, after the integration of the principality into the colonial state in 1875. Thus, the Ramlila emerges at a period when the developmental role of the Banaras ruling house as well as its political independence have both been extinguished

What then is the function of this ideology ? Kapur correctly notes "the Maharaja's identity receives support from the spectacle of the Ramlila . .for being a King is at no time spotlighted, displayed, pointed towards, as it is done during the month of the performance."[19] And as is usual in myth, the task is accomplished through multiplying metaphors where the king stands as the symbol of the ruling deity of the city, Shiva As the regent of Shiva, the performance begins only if he or one of his family members in present; only he and his guest view it astride an elephant; and he interrupts the performance for prayers and so on.

Then his metaphorical equivalence with Rama is stressed when it is his worship of arms (i.e. iron) that takes the centre-stage and he leads the procession of the audience to Lanka. But metaphor is not enough, for we see that when it comes to the killing of Ravana, he is absent, "as one King should not witness the death of another."[20] Thus we see that in myth and ritual mere relational identity is not enough. A metonymic transformation is required, where a part of one scheme of things is physically introduced into the other, giving an illusion of a *real* transformation, resulting in a new relation entering the minds of people.

This is enacted in the Maharaja's palace, when out of the context of the *Ramacharitamanasa*, the Maharaja fetes the gods in his palace "Within one evening, the Maharaja pays tribute to the gods like all the devotees in Ramnagar would like to but cannot since they are not royalty; he sanctifies his own home by having the *swarupas* (symbols of deity) enter it; he achieves contemporaneity with the gods by stepping directly into their *lila*; and he completes his duties as a patron by rewarding his performers. Over and above that he reclaims his ground as Maharaja. During the previous 30 days Ramnagar town has been Rama's home and space....on the peripheries of which the Maharaja remained. Today we more from Tulsi's and Rama's territory into that of the Maharaja's *not only figuratively but actually*."[21] Thus the purpose of the enactment is to legitimise the Maharaja's role in a manner in which, for obvious reasons, a colonial power could not.

Kapur, however, introduces another aspect in her paper, which is developed as it should be. She notes : "When the Maharaja's privileges as ruler of Banaras were abolished in 1949, the Government of India agreed pay him Rs. 10,000 for the Ramlila and for the maintenance of the temp connected with it. This amount was later increased to Rs. 115,000."[22] *It is understandable that a despotic or colonial power should need to prop up its henchmen by such ideological means, but it is inexplicable in an independent state that forced the colonial masters to retreat before the onslaught of the national movement should do so, unless ofcourse, its manner of acquiring independence from its enemy left much to be desired : that is, the failure* to complete the agrarian revolution to acquire the genuine support of the masses for the Indian state. Failing that any legitimacy, be it of the *Puranas* or the Ramnagar Ramlila would have to do. The weakness of the anthropological approach is that while it can explore the purely *ideological function* of the word, it is blind to the process and analysis of the survival and collapse of ideologies which can only develop on the basis of a historical understanding. Only Kapur's paper touches on this marginally in this volume, otherwise, it is generally lacking, leading to a very superficial understanding of the word.

However, there are certain insights, which the anthropological method does bring into relief. In Roma Chatterji's paper : *The Voyage of the Hero : the Self and the other of one Narrative tradition of Purulia*, one cannot help but question the reduction of 'travel' narrative stories set in caste society to a simplistic 'self-other' pattern, and the editor also notes "that in the stories the other is not modelled after one single image."[23] At a more general level, there is a concept of the self transformed through struggle, and "the struggle is manifested in different ways depending on the initial impetus responsible for the voyage,"[24] in which stages of life are represented, showing the superficiality of the analytical categories used by the author.

It is significant, however, as Chatterji notes : "In these stories, the society is initially in a state of conflict in which even if there are reflexive selves they are in a hostile relationship with those around them. Instead of communication and cooperation, there is only misunderstanding and deception. From this state the stories describe the movement through the voyage-a liminal process-by which the social group is formed, self-consciousness and maining established, though very painfully at times."[25] Obviously the stories deal with social contradictions which they highlight and try to resolve, a process which can only be analysed in the concrete historical conditions they emerge and flourish in and not structurally only.

A detailed analysis of all such contradictions is not possible, but there is one theme that recurs in a number of articles and which has a broader significance, which is worth analysing. The importance of marriage as a quest (very often representing the fruit of victory in a contest) contrasts sharply with the attitude to women, who are either represented as witches or are sacrificed in the tales. This is a feature common to both the Purulia stories and that of Puran Bhagat,[26] where Luna, the evil step-mother and Sundari, the sacrificed woman are both present. It is interesting that both these sets of stories are

popular among peasant communities where obviously the economic importance of the farm labour of women conflicts sharply with their low status in Hindu society, giving birth to an ambivalence towards wives who are either projected as evil spirits or innocent sacrifices. This attitude clearly shows that peasant society cannot accept the Hindu ideal of the servile and submissive wife and the conflict between that idealisation and the economic reality gave birth to a body of literature that was fundamentally against women, representing them either as 'evil' or part and parcel of a "sacrificial resolution"[27] of this contradiction. In other words, *violence alone is the basis of the degradation of women in Hindu society*, but the theme is neither picked up nor elaborated by the authors of this volume in spite of their avowed interest in "existential" problems.

But a related aspect is noted by Gill that "unlike the Oedipus myth, where the son kills the father and marries his mother, the disequilibrium in the Puran legend is just the opposite.. .It is the mother who seduces the son, and it is the father who kills his progeny. In this mother-son relation, what is challenged is the authority and, consequently, the masculinity of the father."[28] The "mother" here, as we have seen above, is an ambivalent figure, here ambivalence being represented as two persons, a good real mother and a bad step-mother, but the father, as in the case of Dasratha, is exonerated of his guilt for the "sacrifice" of his son; a sacrifice Yayati exacts in far more crude terms. This reflects the enormous need, in a strongly male dominated society to ideologically buttress the gerontocratic principle, as killings between fathers and sons were common among the ruling classes, both Hindu and Muslim, but unacceptable to the peasantry, hence the ambivalance expressed in the stories. Gill describes it as follows : "It is the older generation, the generation of authority and power, the generation that gives birth but wants to withhold the generative process of growth, that fails. When an element of the old structure wants to pull back the new, sprouting youth, it refuses to oblige. The brutal rejection sows the seeds of extreme frustration and destruction amongst the old. The transformational, creative process that emerges in the legend of Puran is progressive and does not take a single step in regression."[29]

Also, the legend of Puran Bhagat analysed here is a nineteenth century version and could well be compared with earlier versions, as well as with the story of Yayati who took over his son's youth, to show how the gerontocratic principle had suffered a decline over the years. However, the exclusive reliance on existential or psychological analysis fails to explain why the Oedipus myth prevailed in ancient Greece and that of Yayati in ancient India;. and why, a radically altered version of it developed in nineteenth-century Punjab. Why was Sophocles regressive and Shahryar progressive—and for that matter, where does Sartre's Antigone stand in relation to the two ? Also, what is the connection between the 'sacrificial resolution' of Puran Bhagat's love for Sundaran as opposed to the new pattern of romances like Mirza Saheban, Sohni Mahiwal and Heer Ranjha which gained far more popularity in the same period ? The psycholinguistic approach leaves too many ques-

tions unanswered to be considered a rigorous one and the conclusions it often comes to are trite and tautologous. The major weakness of this type of analysis is that it sees literary creations as explanations of themselves in themselves and not in relation to the realities that give birth to them or sustain them over the years. That is why, Urvashi Misri, while explaining the ambiguity, and consequently ritual, attached to children, fails to explain why "integration based on sameness" of the tradition has to be balanced with "uniqueness of the individual" today except in bare structural terms as a "contradiction."[30] In fact, the whole historical development of the individual with the development of capitalist relations of production and their penetration into pre-capitalist societies passes without notice.

In his article on *the Colonial administration and its ordering of knowledge to aid its rule,* Richard Saumarez Smith notes how the British created a situation, where "on the one hand, land mass of India is partitioned into discrete units, every square inch of which is mappable *and has owners and occupants* subject to legal controls; on the other hand, the social mass of India partitioned similarly into *discrete named social groups, each subject to its own rules and customs,* which knowable become governable."[31] However, there is more to knowledge than Smith gives credit for. Facts were ordered by imperialism in a particular fashion to suit its rule. The meaning of *ownership* was quite different under imperial rule from the pre-British period as the numerous experiments with land-tenure reflect. Secondly, the ossification of Indian society into *discrete castes, each with its own rules and customs* (and very often new status given to it by the British as in the case of the category of 'personal law' or 'martial races'), served the process of 'divide and rule' in a manner the old organic caste village never did. However, he ignores the fact that behind this lay the military failure of imperialism in the revolt of 1857 and political problems created by the disaffection of the intelligensia, necessitating a 'scientific' ideology to buttress British rule.

But, Smith notes how this resulted in a situation where "instead of a federation of thousands of 'little republics,' each with its own terms of engagement and its own constitution, society became fragmented into countless statuses in knowledge and in law."[32] *Thus 'personal law' became the innovation through which imperialism institutionalised and codified rules of interpersonal behaviour, arbitrarily at one point in time, to divide the people in a manner in which they were never divided before* Also, individual officers had considerable latitude in granting rights of ownership and status, which they did not hesitate to turn to their own pecuniary advantage.[33] Moreover, the whole system was based on violence, both of imperialist armies and those of its henchmen, the landlords. The law and records came in only to justify it. They could only buttress the violence and not replace it. The fact that this linguistic approach obscures this reality reflects its poverty and its failure to come to terms with irreversible change and the ongoing developments of society, both progressive and revolutionary. Nor can it explain why, of an unprecedented battery of records and legislation, imperialist rule came to an end just when it had declared for itself a millennial life after the

1911 as its custom-built repository of records and legislative activity

This failure to understand and analyse the developmental aspect of society, which ultimately determines which cultural structures survive or transform and which are destroyed, is reflected most sharply in the article on *Violence, Victimhood, and the lauguage of Silence* by Veena Das and Ashis Nandy Their approach, while it can explain socially contained forms of violence like sacrifice and feuding, it is unable to explain revolutionary violence as it limits itself only to one context of discourse. And that is because of their own definition, where both counter-revolutionary and revolutionary violence figure as *anomie*, or just social beakdown, obviously favouring counter-revolution by equating it with revolution. The continuum is seen as "the movement from violence, as generative of society and culture, to the loss of signification in periods of anomie when violence cannot be contained within any structure of ideas. Thus the movement here is from the understanding of order to anomie. The language by which order is created and communicated is easier to comprehend. Loss of signification cannot find a language within which it could be represented."[34]

Yet, they do appreciate the limitations of this approach, for they can vaguely comprehend the existence of "a *hidden* knowledge to find expression at some later date."[35] This knowledge is hidden from them only because of their narrow perspective. From another standpoint, "New art never begins with new forms : new art is born with new man."[36] Here, it is the *"changing relations between man and the world"* through history that are significant.[37] These relations have been studied by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels and their broad parameters outlined as follows : "The first stage is that of the 'initial integrity' of man, which corresponds to the pre-capitalist formations. At this stage man has still not worked out his relations with the world in full measure or become detached from the material and spiritual environment he has created for himself. The second is that of bourgeois social relations and the capitalist division of labour, which tends to lead to the complete bankruptcy of the individual and general alienation of his creative powers. Finally, communism, which is 'the real *appropiration* of the *human* essence by and the complete return of man to himself as a social (human) being—a return accomplished consciously and embracing the entire wealth of previous development."[38] There is nothing *hidden* in the historical method. Only it requires a more rigorous approach and analysis.

From this perspective, "thousands of 'nerves' and 'blood vessels' join art to the social organism as a whole. In one way or another, literally everything exerts influence on the condition of art and its tendencies to develop : the social system; its class structure; economy, politics, ideology; changing social attitudes; the goals which a nation sets itself at a given moment or even their absence; a nation's level of education and culture; the stormy or relatively calm atmosphere of social life; the general situation in the world...."[39], while "structurologists make life easier for themselves by analysing these texts in isolation without regard for the external world reflected and imprinted in them."[40] The Marxist approach does not reduce the progress of man over

time and the role of ideology in it to mere 'ephemeral' or existential ha penings which obscure the inevitable development of man from primiti society to communism.

The authors of this book on the other hand, by over stressing its role transforming reality, achieve a method of white washing the class violen that keeps decaying traditions alive beyond their time as well as obscuring t role of revolutionary struggle in creating new standards, traditions a forms. This approach is not only static, but it also is a defence of backwa ness and decay, while at the same time diverting us from genuinely pr gressive creative effort and an understanding of human progress over tir so essential for intellectuals in any period of history. Obviously such approach can never help us comprehend the word, whose power a limitations were so clearly spelt out by Engels a 110 years ago.

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29 Gill, HS. *op. cit*. p 152

30 Misri, Urvashi, *Child and Childhood a conceptual construction* in *op cit*. p. 131

31 Smith, Richard Saumarez : *Rule-by-Records and Rule-by-Reports · complementary aspects of the British Imperial rule of law* in *op cip* p 156 (italics ours).

32 Smith, Richard Saumarez : *op cit* , p 163

33 Smith, Richard Saumarez *op cit*. p 162 fn 26

34 Das Veena and Nandy Ashis *Violence, Victimhood and the Language of Silence* in *op cit* p. 194

35 *ibid*.

36 The German poet Johannes R Becher quoted in Kuzmenko, Yuri · *Soviet Literature-Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (1983) p 10

37 Kuzmenko, Yuri *op cit*. p. 12

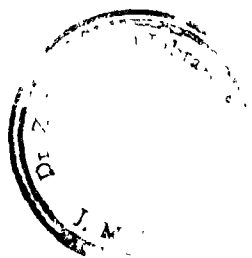
38 Kuzmenko, Yuri *op cit*. p 15

39 Kuzmenko, Yuri *op cit*. p. 8

40 *ibid*.

Attention Subscribers and Agents.

Please note that the June issue of *Social Scientist* is being posted in the first week of August. Complaints for non-receipt of issues should be made accordingly.

— Circulation Manager

Editorial Note

HE ARGUMENT that pre-capitalist land relations impose a fetter upon apitalist development in the country has been advanced by many. Where ney differ from one another is with regard to their differing perceptions of ow this fetter actually operates ; these in turn spring from differing per-eptions of the precise nature of the pre-capitalist relations, the precise ansmutations that have occurred in these relations on account of the ursuit of the capitalist path of development, and the precise contours of he macro-economic dynamics of Indian capitalism. Pradhan Harishankar rasad's lead article in the current number of *Social Scientist* is of interest ecause he clearly takes a particular position on all these questions: haracterising the agrarian relations in large tracts of the country as semi-udal, he holds that the land-owners have no interest in developing the roductive forces in agriculture, and instead deploy much of their surplus, s well as such public funds as they can grab, for maintaing *inter alia* rivate armies of hired goons, in addition to the repressive organs of the ate which at the local level work hand-in glove with them. Such agri-ultural growth as has occurred in the country in recent years has been onfined to areas where semi-feudal relations were weak or absent, which ccounts for the regional divergence in agricultural performance. Clearly owever the scope for continued growth of this kind is limited ; and the ay out of the regime of stagnation and terror lies in the implementation f wide-ranging land reforms. While this position in the specificity is rguable, and in any case needs a good deal of further substantiation, it worth taking note of by students of contemporary Indian society.

The historical genesis in the colonial period of the agrarian relations hich emerged in two different regions of the country is discussed in the her two articles, one dealing with parts of what constituted the Madras esidency and the other dealing with tribal Maharashtra. The precise ifferences between the British and the pre-British revenue systems, the ssentially pecuniary considerations that motivated the British adoption f different revenue settlements at different time-periods, the divergence etween the actual outcomes of the settlements and the theoretical pro-nastications that were used to justify their introduction, are all quite

familiar territory to students of Indian economic history, th territory does abound in disputes as well. The article discussing wari settlement in Madras Presidency is of interest not because i sions are startlingly new but because it makes use of a substantia of source material to support its conclusions thus giving ther foundation. The other article which compares the experiences of t and the Worli tribesmen in Maharashtra, begins by locating ea within its specific geographical environment, investigates the i British subjugation in each case, and emphasises the different r which the two groups come to share, each in its own specific f common fate of degradation that engulfs them in the new system.

The notes in this number deal with divergent themes. Navlakha examines the speeches made by ruling party members du recent parliamentary debate on the Muslim Women's Bill, and c clear trace of a "Hindus-are-superior" view in some of these sp a subtle appeal is thus made to one type of communalism eve appeasing the fundamentalists and communal elements of anoth This, he argues, constitutes an important element of the new rul strategy that has been evolving: a subtle but deliberate prom communal consciousness as a means of political "management' Ramana argues that an important reason why inflation has been c tively modest despite huge budget deficits in recent years, has be apart from the succession of good harvests, a diversion of sp activity away from the commodity markets to the stock marke diversion has been stimulated by the new measures of economic ' sation" introduced in the eighties. The fact that such diversions fro do occur in the Indian economy with significant consequences f behaviour is a noteworthy feature of its functioning.

PRADHAN H. PRASAD*

Institutional Reforms and Agricultural Growth

GROWTH and development are so much associated with the institutional set-up that any analysis of growth in isolation from 'relations of production' is an excercise in futility. Changes in production are not only dependent on technological changes but are also related to the mode of appropriation and use of economic surplus. Technological progress is also considerably influenced by the motivation which a particular set of 'relations of production' provide for investment. The incentive for investment in technology, *ceteris paribus*, is greater in a system where the class which appropriates the economic surplus pays the direct producers a fixed quantum than in a system which provides sharing of gross produce in a certain fixed proportion. In a system where on account of risk and small scale of production, the quantum of surplus which is appropriated is fixed, there is hardly any motive for those who appropriate surplus value, to invest in technological progress.

Before the advent of the British, agriculture was the most important activity and source of livelihood for people in India. The mode of appropriation of economic surplus from the direct producers in agriculture was mainly through land revenue and land rent, petty customary exactions (which varied in nature and content from place to place) and to some extent through usury.[1] Though these obligations on the direct producers had the force of tradition, use of force by the hierarchy of landlords, ranging from autonomous chieftains to petty intermediaries, was not infrequent.[2] "Thus, there emerged not only a variety of land rights but also a kind of a pyramidical structure in agrarian relations wherein rights of various kinds were superimposed upon each other. The burden of the shares of the different categories of zamindars and also of the imperial revenue demand ultimately fell on the cultivator and placed such a strain on the agrarian economy that much progress was hardly possible."[3] The surplus which was appropriated was mainly used to raise military strength for power and prestige, to settle disputes and to control direct producers which was necessary in a situation where 'might was right'. There were conflicts of interests between the lords themselves, between

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lords and over-lords and between different types of lords and the state. *Therefore, hardly any surplus was left for expanded reproduction.* Thi can be termed as *feudal production relations.* *The village artisans* were self employed and catered to the local needs. The Indian handicrafts which by the eighteenth century had attained world wide acclaim, prospered around the feudal courts and seats of power and were patronised by the ruling classes. Here, either the craftsmen worked under a master crafts man or there was widespread use of the 'putting-out' system of production

British policy was essentially aimed at the destruction of Indian handicrafts so as to secure a market for the industrial output of Britain and extraction of surplus value for military expenses in India and indus trial investment at home. Therefore, colonial policy allowed the agrarian structure to remain almost the same except that the private armies (excep in native states) were abolished. The land rights were enforced by a bourgeois legal system. A bourgeois superstructure was imposed on feuda 'production relations'. Therefore, in the rural areas the mode of appro priation of surplus during colonial rule period was through feudal land revenue, land rent and petty feudal exactions and an increasing scale o usury. As usury, which arose out of chronic poverty, became an importan method of exercising control over the direct producers (in view of th absence of private armies), the rural oligarchy had developed a vested interest in keeping the direct producers in abject poverty and, therefore remained inimical to overall development. The essential approach wa not to maximise return on land but to maximise hold on direct producers Not that force was not used or that musclemen were not employed t control the direct producers, but these were used in collusion with an with the support of the functionaries of the British administration, th police, the judiciary and the executive. The autonomy of the rural ric in this context was somewhat reduced, but eventually they collaborate with imperialism. There was another aspect of feudal 'production rela tions' which was different from West European feudalism. Even durin the pre-colonial days tenancy rights, by and large, were hereditary an implied limited occupancy rights. Because of this and the British policy c de-industrialisation and thwarting capitalist development outside agricultu which increased pressure on land, proletarianisation in the Marxist sens of the term, also did not take place.

The pre-British trend in expansion of commodity production got boost because of colonial policy. Its concern was opening of the India market for British manufacture in exchange for primary products. I order to increase surplus appropriation, it tilted the terms of trade heavi against primary products, specially agriculture. This led to widesprea pauperism among direct producers in agriculture and robbed this sector o any significant private investment and strengthened the feudal institution That is why some of us term it as 'semi-feudal production relations'. Eve

in the post-independence era, even after the abolition of the land revenue collection rights of the intermediaries in the fifties of this century (in the name of land reforms), there has hardly been any fundamental change in the 'production relations' in the rural belt of India and the rural oligarchy of the semi-feudal set-up remains inimical to rapid overall development.[5] These reforms were initiated in the mid-fifties and were completed by the end of the decade. This gave the rural oligarchy a temporary set-back. But by the early seventies it consolidated its position. It is evident that in India the two important modes of appropriation of surplus even to-day are Marxian ground rent and usury. Indian agriculture is still predominantly pre capitalist. By capitalist mode of production we understand, at the risk of being accused of oversimplification, a situation characterised by "commodity production" and "free labour". Marx very clearly elaborated this when he said "that two very different kinds of commodity-possessors must come face to face and into contact ; on the one hand, the owners of money, means of production, means of subsistence, who are eager to increase the sum of values they possess, by buying other people's labour-power ; on the other hand, free labourers, the sellers of their own labour-power, and therefore the sellers of labour. Free labourers, in the double sense that neither they themselves form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, nor do the means of production belong to them, as in the case of peasant-proprietors ; they are, therefore, free from, unencumbered by, any means of production of their own. With this polarisation of the market for commodities, the fundamental conditions of capitalist production are given. The capitalist system pre-supposes the complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by which they can realise their labour. As soon as capitalist production is once on its own legs, it not only maintains this separation, but reproduces it on a continually extending scale The process, therefore, that clears the way for the capitalist system, can be none other than the process which takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production ; a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage labourers."[6] It is evident from this that in a capitalist mode of production, in its purest form, the surplus value is appropriated from direct producers through the labour process alone. The rent, interest and profits which exist therein, are the modes of sharing of surplus and not of appropriation of surplus from the direct producers. However, this purest form of capitalist mode of production does not conform to the actual conditions even in the most advanced capitalist countries. Time never completely erases all the past institutions. Some institutions linger on for a considerable period of time. Therefore, while characterising any 'mode of production' or 'social formation', one has to look at the dominant features of the production relations and its historical

process of evolution.

It is evident from Tables I and II that tenancy is an institution which continues to be important and widespread. Tenancy and usury are still important modes of appropriation of surplus value. Landlords, employers and village money lenders are the major sources which even now advance loans to the direct producers (Table II column V).

Table II column II provides evidence that except in Haryana and Punjab, more than two-fifth of agricultural labour households reported possessing land. There is evidence pointing to a significant use of attached farm workers (Table II column VI). The agricultural labourers are 'not free' in either sense of the term Column III of Table II provides evidence that surplus appropriation through the labour process is yet to emerge as a dominant aspect in agricultural production. Indian agriculture thus provides ample evidence of pre-capitalist production relations. There is, of course, some evidence of significant levels of commodity production (Table I column V). In the case of cereals and food-grains 'non-commodity production' still accounts for half, if not more.[7] Even if commodity production would have been more pronounced, this alone would not be sufficient for capitalist mode of production. Even feudal mode of production can have fairly developed commodity production. "The outstanding case where the connection does not hold is the recrudescence of feudalism in Eastern Europe at the end of the fifteenth century-that "second serfdom" of which Friedrich Engels wrote-a revival of the old system which was associated with the growth of production for the market. Alike in the Baltic States, in Poland and Bohemia expanding opportunities for grain export led, not to the abolition, but the augmentation or revival of servile obligations on the peasantry, and to arable cultivation for the market on the large estates on a basis of serf labour. Similarly in Hungary the growth of trade, the growth of large estate-farming and increased impositions on the peasants went hand in hand."[8] Therefore it would not be out of place to maintain that the institutional set-up in Indian agriculture still remains dominated by semi-feudal production relations, with terms of trade still remaining heavily against agriculture[9] and the dominant rural oligarchy remains inimical to rapid overall development of agriculture.

II

Inspite of colonial policy aimed at promoting industrialisation in home country at the cost of the colonies, the British had to undertake rail and road construction and a limited degree of industrialisation in India. Jute manufacturing, engineering industry and banking etc developed in eastern India. But since the British also had a firm control over mercantile trade in eastern India, industrial development there was not an independent one. On the other hand, a strong mercantile trade survived inspite of the British,

in western India. This led to the development of western Indian industrial bourgeoisie which, was not compradore.[10] That is why India witnessed the earliest anti-colonial movement in the Third World. This anti-colonial movement reached its climax when the Indian National Congress gave the 'Quit India' slogan in 1942. The hegemony of the movement was in the hands of west Indian bourgeoisie who by then had acquired the characteristic of big bourgeoisie, and mobilised the support of all classes in rural India, except zamindars. talukdars, inamdars and rulers of the native states.

A coalition of big bourgeoisie and traditional rural oligarchy enmeshed in linguistic ethos, ethnicity and cultural identities, emerged as ruling classes after 1947. While the former strove for a strong unitary state, the latter pressed for regional autonomy. The federal structure and subsequent reorganisation of states in India was the outcome of the pressure exerted by numerous traditional feudal identities and heritage. Since the dominant economic issue during the period of freedom movement was the abject poverty of the masses related to non-development, the Indian state, dominated by big bourgeoisie, planned for capitalist development under its patronage. By the mid-fifties the strategy of development was firmly laid down in terms of accumulation and technology. The process of development that got initiated in India brought forth evidence suggesting that India was moving towards a 'self-reliant' growth path which was not in conformity with the imperialist design for development of the Third World countries.

The Indian model of the First Five Year Plan emphasised mainly on investment and accumulation. Since, immediately after independence, India found itself having quite sizeable sterling balances, it did not worry much about the inflow of funds from abroad and manufacture of capital-goods within the country. But the Indian bourgeoisie was encountering difficulties because of the virtual non-existence of a capital goods industrial sector in India. It found that import of technology and capital goods could be done only on the terms of imperialism even when foreign exchange was hardly a problem. Therefore, by the mid-fifties the planning scenario changed. The industrial policy resolution of 1956 and the two sector model of the Second Five Year Plan laid great emphasis on 'heavy and capital goods' industries. The West advised strongly against this approach. When India approached western countries for its steel project, the U.S.A., the U.K. and France declined one after the other. India, however, went ahead with the help of Soviet collaboration. The foundation for a 'self-reliant' growth path was firmly laid. By the late fifties Middle East policy was reoriented with an eye on the development of South-South trade. These evoked further hostility from imperialism. The international agencies (like World Bank, IMF, UNDP etc) created conditions leading to drastic reduction of funds resulting in devaluation and, thereafter, three years of 'plan holiday' in

the second half of the sixties.

The Indian big bourgeoisie has achieved almost a monopolistic grip on the internal industrial market. The two biggest industrial houses, Birlas and Tatas, alone accounted for 9 percent of the asset of the private corporate sector in 1976, while the top twenty accounted for 21 per cent.[11] There is evidence that their monopoly power has increased in the post independence era. Table III shows their growth since 1964.

The percentages of sales of top 20 and top 45 industrial groups in 1976 to net domestic product of manufacturing sector were 61.[illegible]7 and 87.45 respectively. Bardhan[12] gives the list of the top 20 industrial groups as per sales in 1981. If one examines the list, one finds that Ashok Leyland and Reliance Textiles did not find a place either among the top 45 industrial houses in 1972 (reply to a Rajya Sabha question) or in Goyal's list.[13] There were others, e.g. Kirloskar, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj, TVS, Larsen and Toubro and Scindia who also could not have been included in the top 20 on the sales criterion in 1972. These 8 industrial groups which figured among the top 20 in 1981 on the sales criterion registered the highest average growth rate per year of 46.29 percent during the ten year period of 1972 to 1981, while top 20 industrial groups as a whole registered a growth rate of only 31.31 percent, Tatas and Birlas 28.31 percent, net domestic product in private organised sector 18 63 percent and the manufacturing sector as a whole registered a growth rate of 19.75 percent per year. The sale of the top 20 in 1981 amounted to 87 and 67 percent respectively of the net domestic product in private organised sector and manufacturing as a whole.

This not only implies the growing importance of big bourgeoisie in the economy, but that the lower group of big industrial bourgeoisie have registered a very high rate of growth. It is this group which went in a big way for foreign collaboration and is more dependent on imperialism.[14] Though big bourgeoisie interests were completely opposed to imperialism in the context of its own exclusive domination over the Indian market, it remained dependent (more so for technology) on the imperalist set. As we have seen, some gradually became more dependent than the others; so, there was a clash of interests within the big bourgeoisie itself.

Because of low growth of Indian agriculture (mainly due to semi-feudal relations of production), industry was facing a demand constraint for its products. But it had sufficient monopoly power not to allow terms of trade going against it. The terms of trade had continued to move in its favour (against agriculture) till 1964. But this trend could not be sustained longer in view of the rate of growth of agriculture remaining below industry's requirements and the existence of limited outlets for industrial exports (see Table III). The terms of trade began to move against industry. This contradiction was resolved by big bourgeoisie's attempt to limit the growth of industrial output at the middle level, associated with decline in capacity

utilization,[15] and promoting agricultural growth in selected pockets. The big bourgeoisie was not powerful enough to go ahead with land reforms so as to remove the stranglehold of feudal rural oligarchy. Therefore, it planned for intensive agricultural growth in selected pockets where the semi-feudal relations were weak and irrigation infrastructure facilities were available. The Community Development programme was replaced by Intensive Area Development programme. By mid-sixties the thrust of the agricultural development policy was in terms of High Yielding Varieties of seeds and fertilizers. Consequently some parts of India showed a much higher rate of growth than others, thereby increasing regional inequality. By 1980-81, industry thus achieved terms of trade (against agriculture) which were even more favourable than what had obtained in 1950-51. The big bourgeoisie was, thus, able to resolve the contradiction for the time being. But in this process, the uneven agricultural development brought forth regional tensions and also contradiction between big and middle level bourgeoisie got deepened.

Thus, there have emerged contradictions within the bourgeioisie.[16] The big bourgeioise attempted to limit the growth of middle and small ones and on the other hand, the lower upper and even smaller ones, attempted to increase collaboration with the imperialist set at an expanding scale to get a better foot-hold in the relatively inelastic Indian market. In this conflict the big bourgeoisie uses the bureaucratic apparatus which has been our colonial legacy. Over time an elaborate and complex bureaucratic network has emerged encompassing price controls, rationing and control of inputs, capital, transport and credit, regulations regarding areas of operations, licencing procedures, MRTP and FERA regulations, controls on trade and foreign exchange which, without much affecting the big bourgeoisie, retarded the growth of industrial sector in general and small sector in particular.[17] On the other hand, pressure was mounted by imperialism and the section of bourgeoisie which was deeply involved with it, leading to liberalisation in operation of FERA companies, special facilities for investment to non-resident Indians or persons of Indian origin and import liberalisation.[18] This increasing collaboration resulted in an increasing drain of resources abroad. Sau's estimate for visible net outflow which is given in Table IV, provides some evidence for this. But still more is lost to the economy through invisible methods like transfer pricing etc.[19] This drain of resources creates an additional drag on both private and public sector investment which in turn operates as an additional drag on the expansion of home market and thus slows down industrial growth. This, coupled with excessive bureaucratic control, and the use of imported high-cost technology and other industrial inputs (owing to transfer pricing) is responsible for the high cost industrial structure of the economy. The economic crisis further deepened because

sions in the shape of tax free income and huge subsidies on irrigation vater, power, diesel, fertilizers and credit.[20] Ahluwalia lists "four factors which contributed to industrial stagnation. These were (a) slow growth of gricultural incomes and their effect in limiting the demand for industrial oods, (b) the slowdown in public investment after the mid-sixties with its articular impact on infrastructural investment, (c) poor management of he constraints, and (d) the industrial policy framework, including both omestic industrial policies and trade policies and their effect in creating a igh cost industrial structure in the economy."[21]

III

The transfer of power also allowed the continuance of a bureaucratic tructure which was the creation of imperialism. The bureaucratic structure 'as so archaic that it had developed an in-built capacity to thwart any uick change. The Indian bureaucracy, traditionally drawn mostly from ne rural upper and middle classes, had remained wedded to feudal raditions and values and even to-day remains completely divorced from ne bourgeois work culture. The bulk of the government sector functionaries even to-day will claim with relish their ancestry (only a few enerations ago) to landed gentry. Those drawn from the urban upper nd middle classes with no landed interest are in hopeless minority in the ll India context. In most of the states, they are serving the ruling olitical elite imbued with the feudal ethos, and therefore, they remain edded to feudal values. Moreover, the bureaucracy has had a tradition f looking down upon indigenous enterprises. It finds them far inferior to neir western counterpart. Moreover, foreign merchants and industrial ompanies still offer lucrative assignments to the bureaucrats (after tirement) and to their wayward children. Therefore, the bureaucracy ill favours imperialist linkages. This is reinforced by the links which ave developed increasingly between the bureaucracy and international gencies such as the World Bank and the IMF.

IV

The post Second World War era found world imperialism in a lemma. It was not sure how long lasting will be the phase of recovery view of its losing direct political control over the colonies, and the nergence of a socialist bloc which implied a shrinking of market for nperialist nations. Therefore, unless the poor nations develop at a faster te the market for the industrial goods produced by the imperialist set ould be facing a demand crisis. That is why the IMF and a host of ternational organisations became concerned with the development of wly freed countries under the patronage of world imperialism. In this

context world imperialism came into conflict with archaic productic relations and the rural oligarchy in such nations as were developing und its patronage such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. These natioı could not have achieved rapid growth in the absence of the most radic land reform measures (outside the socialist bloc in the post Second Wor War period) which completely destroyed the traditional agrarian structur In South Korea strict provisions were enacted and implemented to prevei the re-emergence of disequalising tendency with a low ceiling of thr hectares per family, and thereby the stranglehold of the traditional rur oligarchy was destroyed.[22] Imperialism, therefore, was busy promotin in the developing economies a path of growth where the nations woul remain subservient to imperialism, where there is growth of comprador bourgeoisie and the state remains under imperialist control. Examples o nations following such growth path are to-day South Korea, Taiwan Singapore, etc. These countries import a variety of capital goods an technology from the imperialist set. Then they use their own cheap labou and the commodities so fabricated are exported by the transnationals, wh control and channel the bulk of the world trade of the developing and th developed nations. Nations engaged in export-oriented growth of thi kind belong to the 'dependence' paradigm as against India's growth path where the inflow of capital remains low and internalisation of technolog gets a higher premium than what obtains in the countries in 'dependence' paradigm, resulting in rather low growth of income and employment. But the contradiction between the Indian big bourgeoisie and imperialism which continued, was the reason why imperialism lost its enthusiasm for radical land reforms in India by the sixties. This was also echod in writings within India. For example, the study by Dandekar and Rath rejects the radical land reform possibility maintaining that "the very low ceilings, which any sizable programme of redistribution of land will require, cannot be justified on sound economic considerations or rational calculation."[23] They further add that "it is futile to try to resolve the problem of rural poverty, in an overpopulated land, by redistribution of land which is in short supply.[24] They, however failed to realise that radical land reforms were needed for destroying the stranglehold of the traditional rural oligarchy. What was probably forgotten in this context is that the rapid growth of both South Korea and Japan could not have been achieved in the absence of land reforms. The land reform measures taken by them remain the most radical outside the socialist bloc and completely destroyed the traditional agrarian structure. The only success stories of poverty eradication and overall rural development are found in the countries namely Korea, Japan and China which have carried out radical land reforms.

Therefore, the big bourgeoisie, because of its limitations, and imperialism, because of its design, put the land reforms issue completely

in to the background by the early seventies. "The major thrust of American-inspired Indian policy in the field of agriculture was 'technology first'. Land reforms, which had been already stalled by the resistance of landlords and big farmers, were practically shelved in the 1960s".[25] The big bourgeoisie went ahead with the New Technology (what is also popularly known as the Green Revolution), a combination of irrigation, HYV seeds and fertilisers for agricultural growth. The following Table shows that agriculture growth during the period 1957-58 to 1963-64 which is associated with limited land reforms of mid-fifties, is higher than in the 1963-64 to 1971-72 period involving the New Technology. The last column of the Table also suggests that because the land reform was of a very limited nature, the technology based growth could not be sustained except in a very narrow strip where semi-feudal production relations were weak or where some success was achieved in land reforms such as in West Bengal and Kerala,[26] or where there was notable expansion of irrigation as in parts of Rajasthan. The effects of the New Technology have been most in evidence in the north-west region[27] notably in Haryana, Punjab and western U.P. "Thus, the so-called green revolution which is associated with the second period, while it has indeed dramatically improved yields in particular crops (e.g. wheat) in particular regions (e.g. the north-west), has not led to any acceleration in the overall rate of growth in agriculture. Put another way, the yield growth of recent years has barely managed to compensate for the area expansion of earlier years in overall contribution to growth. There has actually been a significant deceleration in the growth of production of commercial crops (oil seeds, fibres, etc.) in the second period, and within foodgrains the production of pulses, a major source of protein for the poor, has been largely stagnant".[28]

Imperialism, however, pressed forth the argument that technological growth and capital formation development strategy in India had a tendency to bypass the relatively poorer people. That is why international organisations like World Bank, and Asian Development Banks etc. began to follow aggressively the McNamara strategy of high consumption oriented and concessional loans programmes for target groups, namely child care, mid-day meal, rural health, slum clearance, schemes for non-viable industrial technology (for example the intermediate technology), support for projects for marginal farmers and landless rural workers etc. The attempt was to further increase the stranglehold of bureaucratic and semi-feudal structures on the Indian economy and to dilute the resources needed for accumulation and technology. The Indian bureaucracy was a willing ally for such programmes.

The whole poverty question in the manner in which it is being debated to-day is the outcome of this process. But the analysis of the data suggests that the agricultural growth and increase in foodgrain pro-

duction leads to a decline in proportion of poor in rural areas and Trickle Down Modified (TDM) thesis is valid also in the Indian context.[29] Ahluwalia's analysis also shows that "at the all-India level there is a strong support for the hypothesis that the incidence of rural poverty is inversely related to agricultural performance."[30] His findings also suggest that in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh "agricultural growth offsets the adverse impact of other factors so that if only agriculture can grow fast enough, it is likely to reduce the incidence of poverty".[31]

V

The above analysis provides ample evidence of a contradiction between 'legitimacy and growth' in India because even after more than 35 years of independence and effort for rapid development, two-fifth of rural population remains in abject poverty. There is evidence to suggest that poverty alleviation is positively dependent on growth, particularly, agricultural growth. But the low rate of agricultural growth, which has caused low overall development in the country is responsible for low rate of eradication of poverty in this country. The single most important factor responsible for low and uneven growth of agriculture is the existence of 'semi-feudal production relations' in rural India. In such a set-up, the flow of funds into rural areas in the name of planning and development for rural electrification, irrigation work, land conservation schemes, afforestation, road construction and other infrastructural support, are mostly usurped by rural oligarchy in collusion with the state functionaries and the bureaucracy. This is widespread and is more pronounced in such areas where 'semi-feudal' agrarian relations are strong and the bureaucracy, enmeshed in feudal traditions, works hand-in-glove with the rural rich. Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Eastern U.P are some of the notable examples where such a situation continues. In such places, a section of rural rich has emerged which takes contracts for almost all works of the government, and also works, controlled and sponsored by public sector. This section shamelessly and with impunity usurps the large bulk of public funds in this process. It also acts as brokers and agents for different interests and charges a heavy fee for itself.[32] The bulk of the flow of credit and funds for target oriented schemes for rural poor are siphoned off by this section, the new rural rich. There is any amount of evidence to suggest that the programmes of poverty alleviation have miserably failed[33] and the reasons assigned for the failure are inadequate funding, faulty formulation of schemes and more often their poor implementation by the existing bureaucratic set-up. What is forgotten in this context is that the bureaucracy, as an institution, is serving faithfully and loyally its master, that is the rural oligarchy.

Thus, the large bulk of public sector funds, meant for 'expanded production' in rural areas, are appropriated by the rural oligarchy and is put to non-development use (not even in personal savings). That is why even when the gains of limited agricultural growth have been shared mainly by the rural rich,[34] the marginal propensity to save in rural belt has remained low and constant.[35]

The rural oligarchy (including the new rural rich) uses these funds for its petty luxuries and to strengthen the control over the direct producers. The grip of the rural oligarchy over the polity has begun to be threatened under the impact of rising middle peasantry and increased consciousness of the poor peasants in mid-sixties. Thereafter we find emergence of private armed militia in rural areas (a reminder of pre-British days) which further strengthens the semi-feudal institutions. The violence on the direct producers has increased. In some rural belts even the bureaucracy dare not oppose the open violence perpetuated by the rural oligarchy. That is why since mid-sixties, there is increasing evidence of atrocities on the direct producers and counter violence.

Thus, in the present situation of feudal ethos and deepening of economic crisis in terms of low and uneven growth, rapidly increasing unemployment, contradictions between middle peasantry and rural oligarchy and also between middle and big bouregeoisie, a weak working class movement, and imperialist machinations, traditional identities surface forcefully. This gets mixed up with legitimate demands, greater regional autonomy against centralised economic policy, and sometimes creates situations which appear as secessionist movements on communal and ethnic lines. The big bourgeoisie uses this opportunity to strengthen the forces for centralisation and curtailment of regional autonomy.

Therefore, the case for land reforms was never as strong as now. Land reforms are needed to break the power of the rural oligarchy. The land reform in terms of Gandhijee's slogan of 'land to the tillers' is the one that is needed. This is the first institutional reform that is required for transforming agrarian structure for a sustained growth in agriculture and overall development of the economy. Other institutional reforms can follow and not precede this basic crucial institutional reform.

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Table I

	Lowest 10 percent of the cultivating household		Percentage of household leasing-in land	Percentage of homegrown consumption to total consumption of food-grains
	Percentage leasing-in land	Percentage indebted		
(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)
Andhra Pradesh	8.40	73.64	29.95	36.17
Assam	14.34	37.96	49.17	63.99
Bihar	29.22	69.72	33.48	47.69
Gujarat	1.44	61.71	13.74	46.86
Haryana	37.03	70.51	29.41	52.47
Karnataka	10.58	72.71	27.68	43.99
Kerala	24.47	67.21	17.67	21.41
Madhya Pradesh	22.25	59.67	23.26	63.02
Maharastra	7.29	57.82	14.69	39.05
Orissa	12.21	56.83	29.28	54.31
Punjab	35.25	66.75	27.52	46.89
Rajasthan	15.57	73.33	14.81	60.48
Tamilnadu	13.51	70.80	31.16	30.31
Uttar Pradesh	22.07	61.05	24.96	57.94
West Bengal	10.95	48.13	30.63	53.38
All India	16.75	63.00	N.A.	N.A

Source : National Sample Survey, Twenty Fifth Round (1970-71) for columns II and III, Twenty Sixth Round (1971-72) for column IV and Ninteenth Round (1964-55) for column V.

Table II

	Percentage of				
	Agricultural labour households with land.	Self-employed among the direct producers	Agricultural labour households reporting indebtedness.	Loans taken by Agricultural labour households from employer money lender	Cultivating households reporting attached farm workers
(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)	(V)	(VI)
Andhra Pradesh	41.17	44.55	66.09	44.09	11.57
Assam	46.66	73.03	11.75	20.97	81.89
Bihar	60.03	55.47	52.80	65.58	21.63
Gujarat	40.18	61.59	41.98	26.48	11.21
Haryana	7.54	74.96	66.86	45.04	8.86
Karnataka	45.62	51.77	52.25	30.56	17.90
Kerala	87.50	51.26	80.76	19.79	2.93
Madhya Pradesh	49.67	67.82	38.86	45.06	16.74
Maharashtra	42.40	N.A.	43.12	15.07	13.66
Orissa	53.43	53.23	40.67	43.95	25.59
Punjab	7.03	64.89	60.87	48.16	21.74
Rajasthan	60.55	86.54	60.53	57.30	2.69
Tamil Nadu	36.35	43.51	66.90	47.84	10.84
Uttar Pradesh	45.24	76.43	47.63	66.96	20.64
West Bengal	60.86	49.66	50.23	36.88	20.80

Source : National Sample Survey Thirty Second Round (1977-78) for columns 2 to 5 and Twenty Sixth Round (1971-72) for column 6.

Table III

		Percentage average growth rate per a[nnum] 1963-64 to 1975-76 Sales	Assets
1.	Tatas and Birlas	22.28	14.60
2.	Top 11 industrial groups* which has assets more than 150 crores of rupees in 1976.	26.84	17.41
3.	Top 20 industrial groups*	28.66	18.45
4.	Net domestic product of manufacturing sector*	20.43	N.A.
5.	Export of manufacturing sector***	11.68	

* Includes Tatas and Birlas

** It relates to production at current prices not sales.

*** It relates to the period 1965 to 1973 and source is Ahluwalia I.J., (1985), *Industrial Growth in India*, p 118.

Source : Goyal, S.K., (1979), *Monopoly Capital and Public Polity*, pp. 56-'

Table IV

Inflow of Foreign Capital into Private Industrial an[d] Commercial Enterprises and Outflow of Income

(Rs. 100 million

Year	Inflow	Outflow	Net outflow (–)
1964-65	10.83	6.11	+4.72
1965-66	6.60	6.52	+0.08
1967-68	8.04	9.47	–1.43
1968-69	6.72	9.88	–3.16
1969-70	2.16	10.01	–7.85
1970-71	3.87	10.25	–6.38
1971-72	7.61	10.71	–3.10
1972-73	6.06	11.08	–5.02
Total	51.89	74.03	–22.10

Source : Sau, Ranjit, *op. cit.*, p. 55

Table V

States	Compound Rates of Growth of Agricultural Production from the triennial average of index numbers for the base and terminal years (percentages)		
	1957-58 to 1963-64	*1963-64 to 1971-72*	*1957-58 to 1978-79*
Andhra Pradesh	2.63	−0.23	0.24
Bihar	5.37	2.57	3.37
Gujarat	6.46	1.93	2.73
Karnataka	3.22	4.49	2.58
Kerala	2.20	3.79	2.03
Madhya Pradesh	1.96	1.66	1.09
Maharastra	1.25	3.66	0.72
Orissa	5.74	0.56	2.63
Punjab/Haryana	3.13	7.48	5.48
Rajasthan	1.70	4.65	2.98
Tamilnadu	3.37	2.68	3.01
Uttar Pradesh	3.21	3.53	2.65
West Bengal	4.32	2.80	3.24

Source : First two columns are from Jose A.V., *Growth and Fluctuation in Indian Agriculture* (memograph) and last column has been estimated from CSO estimates.

*D. SUBRAMANYAM REDDY**

Changing Agrarian Relations and State of Peasantry in Andhra During Early Ninteenth Century

BY THE time the British established their power over the Andhra Region as in other territories several developments were taking place both in England and in India and in different regions of Andhra. Consequent to the Industrial Revolution in England, India had lost the position of exporter of goods to England and on the contrary the country had become as a market and primary producer for the British industry.[1] And due to the impact of the French Revolution the British capitalis's began to demand that their Government should give them equal opportunities in the colonial countries like India.[2] As a result (from the middle of the eighteenth century, and in particular, from the beginning of the nineteenth century) India had been gradually integrated into the world of modern capitalism, of course, in a subordinate or colonial position which led to the "development of under development"[3] As a consequence of this the capitalist elements in the form of land tenures began to penetrate into the agrarian economy of India. Thus a new agrarian structure began to evolve to suit the needs of colonialism[4] whose "relations" were "primarily economic".[5] The early land tenures introduced in Bengal and Madras after 1793 were, in fact, direct responses to Britian's new market requirements.[6]

Here, in India, at this time, while the Company servants were amassing wealth, the company itself was facing financial bankruptcy and it applied for a loan of £ 1400,000.[7] The Company was hard pressed for money for investments in India for the purchase of goods which would fetch higher profits in Europe.[8] Thus, India had to be compelled to pay for her exports or for investments in India and also for purchasing China tea for European markets.[9] Thus, the company was in need of a stable revenue through the extension of cultivation for promoting the trade of the company which was also the main aim of the Bengal settlement.[10] All these factors decided the fate of rural India. The decision to settle the revenues permanently with the zamindars at first and later by the ryotwari system was partly necessitated by the political

*Jawahar Bharti, Kavali, Andhra Pradesh.

and economic considerations of England and the needs of the company in India.

They resulted in the "scientific exploitation of India".[11] In other words by introducing zamindari system in Andhra the company, in the beginning, was only concerned with extorting the maximum amount of revenue with the minimum expenditure.[12] Sunil Sen says that "In the eighteenth century the Government hardly pursued any development-oriented policy, and the overriding object was the security of the land revenue. Through out the nineteenth century the experiments undertaken by the ruling class in land tenure policy were largely determined by revenue considerations"[13]. As a result the zamindari system collapsed.[14] A number of zamindars failed to pay their peshcush and were always in arrears or in debts with high rate of interest ranging from 12 to 24 percent. They also squeezed ryots to pay their own peshcush[15] (apart from other reasons). Thus several estates were sold or auctioned and there were none to purchase in places like Rajahmundary[16] because of the overassessment which led to zamindari revolts. Moreover the default of zamindars in paying tribute led to heavy losses to the Government.[17]

By this time, the ryotwari system was introduced in several places and experiments were being made with it. But the result (or condition) was not much different from that of the zamindari system because its aim too was only to maximise revenues. Under ryotwari, the Government tried to "extend state control into every corner of agricultural life".[18] It had no restrictions on its own powers of enhancing land revenue[19] and thus it was a more profitable system than the zamindari system and the interests and rights of the state could be safeguarded even better under the ryotwari.[20] Even the default of a ryot or a few ryots was not at all a loss to the Government. Though it aimed at "emancipation of the petty farmers from the control of the intermediate ones"[21] the ryots in those areas suffered due to the high pitch of revenue assessment. In 1802 even Munro himself raised the revenue assessment over its previous year and he calculated that the revenues of the state would be more under the ryotwari than under the zamindari system,[22] and that is why he wanted the power of regulating assessment and collection to be in the hands of the Government in order to maximise revenue collections.[22] The authorities were highly pleased with the gradual increase of revenue which rose from £ 402, 637 to £ 606, 909, or an increase of 50 per cent within seven years.[24] The assessment under the ryotwari, during the early years, was so high that in most of the ryotwari areas including the Ceded districts and Chittoor Pollams (after the revolt of Poligars) a reduction of revenue was recommended.[26] Munro, like Cockburn of North Arcot district raised the revenue assessment in order to make it uneconomical to the poligars[26] and force them under such conditions to revolt against the British and then to take it as a cause to eliminate them.[27] The fall in prices of paddy the monetisation of the economy,[28]

rigidity in collections, uncertainty of assessment[29] and absence of reductions in revenue assessments also added to the sufferings of the ryots[30]. Thus in both the areas a new layer of exploiters was superimposed on top of the old. As a result, the first three decades of the nineteenth century were characterised by a series of peasant uprisings. The violent and rapid introduction of capitalist elements into the agrarian economy of India were the chief causes of these revolts[31] As late as in 1836 Bishop Heber expressed that "no native prince demands the rent which we do."[32]

PERMANENT ZAMINDARI SETTLEMENT 1802-1805

Now we come to the actual details of those settlements in Andhra. It was in 1784 that the Company was directed to establish in Bengal permanent rules by which the tributes, rents, services of the zamindars, poligars and Rajas and other native holders "should be in future rendered and paid to the United Company."[33] By this time while the servants of the Company were massing fortunes by hook or by crook, the Company itself was facing financial bankruptcy and applied for a loan of £ 1400,000.[34] The annual engagements made by Hastings had deprived the Company of an assured income. The Company was hard pressed for investments for the purchase of goods.[35] India had to be compelled to pay for her exports. The court of Directors directed that a settlement should be made with the zamindars for a period of ten years in the first instance with a view to making it permanent.[36] Cornwallis also thought "It is for the interest of the State that landed property should fall into the hands of the most frugal and thrifty class of people, who will improve their lands and protect the ryots and thereby promote the general prosperity of the country."[37] He believed that if the upper classes were prosperous, all other classes would benefit. Having seen the English landlords bringing about agricultural improvements, "he supposed that he could develop the Indian landlord who would be English in character and loyal towards the British Government in India."[38] It was this way of thinking that persuaded him to adopt the zamindari system in Bengal, "whereby the local tax collectors become a landholding class and in return for the land they would assure a permanent revenue to the Government and have a surplus with which to improve and develop their holdings."[39] The lawyers of that day believed that the system actually obtaining in England was not only the ancient system of the country but that it was semi-sacred."[40]

Its main architects were English aristocrats and their aristocratic prejudices determined its basic features. The right of private property was sought to be conferred on the zamindar, who was no more than a tax collector and usurped authority during the disintegration of the Mughal empire. The zamindar was invested with the right to collect rent as well as to regulate occupancy of all other tenures. The right belonging to the state was now conferred on individuals. The state, however, could transfer

their rights and confer it on other individuals by open auction for arrears of revenue.[41] While the state revenue alone from the zamindari estates was fixed in perpetuity, the demands of the zamindars on the cultivators were left undefined.[42] This aspect was left undefined because it was thought that such things would be decided by mutual agreement between the zamindar and cultivators. There was indeed in the regulations a mild provision for the intervention of the state to protect the right of the cultivators.[43] But this clause had never been adequately used to protect the peasants.[44]

The Bengal settlement aimed not only at deriving a stable revenue, but also as promoting the extension of cultivation to the waste lands and thereby the trade of the province.[45] The Company had a stake in the trade in agricultural produce in the Telugu districts on the east coast as in other areas. This required a perennial source of investment.[46] It was also with the object (of the Company as also of private British merchants) of diverting the Indian merchants and their resources from trade to land and agriculture that the Company introduced the permanent zamindari system.[47] The competitive power of the agency houses could be lessened, and the Company could perpetuate its monopoly rights.[48] It was the deliberate policy of the government to confer a right of property in the soil on the zamindar. It was not a confirmation of the *statusquo*.[49] Cornwallis did not care who was the owner of the land so long as it was cultivated and the land revenue was regularly paid.[50]

The principles of the permanent settlement can be traced not only to the economic institutions in England but also to English classical economics and the philosophy of laissez-faire. It was thought that the mutual interests of zamindar and tenants would be regulated by the laws of supply and demand in respect of land and labour. The enlightened self-interest of individuals was considered to be essential for the development of the economy.[51] The minutes of Sir Philip Francis in 1772 and 1776 contained copious references to Adam Smith, Mill and Quesnay.[52] Land revenue in India was characterised as rent. The state share of the produce was equated with rent.

The court of Directors, satisfied with the advantages of the permanent settlement as implemented in Bengal, decided to introduce it in other territories in India.[53]

It was in 1765 that the East India Company obtained a *firman* from the Mughal emperor confirming the cession of the Northern Circars, viz. Chicacole, Rajahmundry, Ellore and Kondapalli. Until 1778 annual settlements were made with the existing zamindars Sir Thomas Rumbold made a five-year settlement in that year. Annual settlements with all their oppressive practices were resumed in 1783 and continued till 1786 when a three-year settlement was made. The triennial settlement was continued till 1789 and eventually a five years settlement was concluded with the

zamindars who were assessed at two-thirds of their gross-collection Guntur Circar acquired in 1788 was settled in the same manner. Proclaiming the appointment of Collectors in the place of the C and Councils in 1794, the Government declared itself in favour of policy of introducing in Andhra the permanent settlement as soon as t resources of the country had been surveyed and estimated.[54] The Cour of Directors of the East India Company approved it in 1795. On the basi of the documents left behind by Lord Cornwallis, Wellesley finally recommended its adoption in the Telugu districts of Coastal Andhra. Moreover, until then no fixed principle of revenue administration had been successful. And hence the permanent settlement was thought of as an effective remedy.[55] The Government directed the Board of Revenue to prepare a plan for a permanent settlement with the zamindars in the lands in which the property is vested immediately in the Company. It instructed the Board to form small sub-division of estates and to transfer the proprietary rights of all such lands to native landholders.[56] A permanent assessment was fixed on the basis of the receipts of the last thirteen years. The amount was fixed at two-thirds of the gross produce received by the zamindars. Beginning with a reduced assessment for the first few years it was proposed to increase it annually until a full assessment could be made permanent.[57] The settlement was to be made decennial in the first instance and permanent on the approval of the Directors. But Wellesley went ahead with the permanent settlement, as it would greatly facilitate the settlement of the haveli lands and secure more advantageous terms for the Government.[58] The step was approved by the Directors.[59]

The Special Commission appointed in 1802 for the purpose of settling the permanent assessment of zamindars resolved to grant 'sanads' to all permanently assessed zamindars specifying their obligations and rights.[60] The permanent settlement was first introduced into the *jagir* which included part of Chengalput district and parts of modern Chittoor and Nellore districts. The lands here were mostly 'haveli'. They were split up into estates or 'muttas' and sold.[61] By 1803, the permanent settlement was introduced in the four divisions of Vizagapatam, the Western Pollams of Venkatagiri, Kalahasti, Bommarajupalem (Karvetinagar) and Sydapore etc.[62] The special Commission was abolished in September, 1803 as it had done the job entrusted to it. The Board of Revenue, which took over its duties, permanently settled the rest of the zamindaris in Coastal Andhra.[63]

The zamindars were declared proprietors of arable and waste land within their estates. New zamindars came into existence in places where the haveli lands were auctioned to them. The purchasers of the muttas, called muttahdars, also enjoyed all the privileges of the zamindars. The right of the zamindar over the produce of the land was restricted to the customary rates. They were directed to grant pattas to the ryots, but the

ter could not get pattas in a great majority of cases ; instead the zamindars' extortion oppressed and pauperised the peasants.[64] Where the zamindar infringed on the customary rights of the ryots, the ryots were to seek edress in the civil courts, which were established in the districts. The zamindar was to collect one half of the produce and remit two-thirds of the half to the Government. The East India Company took away from the zamindars those rights of sovereign power which they had usurped in the days of the disintegration of the Mughal empire. They were no longer permitted to keep a military force. The function of preserving law and order was now exercised by the provincial government.[65] The rights which belonged to them and the privileges which they should no longer exercise were all clearly stated For instance they were forbidden to collect salt and salt-petre revenue, tax on liquor and intoxicating drugs, all professional taxes, taxes for police establishments. But the zamindars were confirmed in the possessions of their estates in perpetuity and their peshkush fixed.[66] The estate holder was enjoined to maintain the tanks and water sources in his jurisdiction. Only large irrigation works useful to the country were kept under the supervision of the Government.[67]

OVER-ASSESSMENT AND COLLAPSE OF THE SETTLEMENT

The zamindari system collapsed under the weight of contradictions and the high pitch of revenue collections. The settlement was completed in 1805. It received a check in 1806. All the ancient zamindars were assessed at two thirds of the collections made therein[68] with reference to detailed accounts. Where there were no fixed assets no proportion of the gross 'Jumma' was taken. The Guntur circar was assessed on the basis of the average collections during the previous thirteen years..[69] In a few cases like Venkatagiri, Kalahasti and Karvetinagar, the peshkush was equal to their military services without reference to their assets. In Godavari it was determined on the average collections of several preceding years less a deduction in favour of properietors.[70] In the case of newly created estates the permanent settlement fixed such high peshkush, that they collasped under the weight of over assessment. Many of them were advertised for sale and when there was no purchaser the Government acquired them. In Godavari, Krishna and Ganjam the permanent settlement completely failed. The zamindaries of Godavari fell to pieces one after another. Ganjam estates had no better fate and in Krishna district the estate holders voluntarily surrendered their title deeds. By 1815 some ancient and many proprietary estates were auctioned in Rajahmundry and as there were no proper bidders the government purchased them.

Moreover, the government was convinced that the interests of the state and the rights could be safeguarded only under the ryotwari system. It therefore ordered that in all the districts acquired from the Nawab of

Arcot the ryotwari system should be introduced.[71] Struck by the agrarian discontent and poverty of the people Thomas Munro recorded at a later date his impressions and suggestions in a minute : "because of our creating ...new proprietary zamindars...not reserving a single village in which we could have direct control over the ryots, and...transferring to those proprietors, the karanams who are the source of all informations and diverting the circar lands from...which our influence arose, we have placed the prospect of. .good order among the petty Rajaships."[72] He further suggested "the gradual extension of the Circari lands". "The extension of the circar lands gives us also a great influence over all the military classes residing upon them".[73] In another famous minute Munro concluded that "we have...attempted to create . a kind of landed property, which had never existed. We have relinquished the rights which the sovereign always possessed in the soil and...deprived the real owners, the occupant ryots of their proprietary rights and bestowed them on zamindars...Every...ryot... ought to pay his own rent and that of his tenants...to the Government officer, instead...ryots are made to pay their public rents to a zamindar, they will soon lose their independence become his tenants, and probably be sinking into the class of labourers".[74]

But the permanent zamindari system facilitated regularity in the collection of revenue. It also exempted the Government from the duty of making annual revenue settlements, undertaking investigations into fraud in revenue collections and expending money in the repairs of reservoirs. It also freed the British from the policy of coercion in enforcing the payment of dues by the zamindars and poligars.[75]

The settlement afforded an easy means of collection. But the ryots on the other hand suffered, though Lord Cornwallis admitted that the ryot had property in the land he cultivated, that the zamindars were not permitted to injure the customary rights of the ryots, and that the Government retained power to protect the rights of the ryots. [76] The same view was conveyed by the Board of Revenue to the Collectors.[77] Section 2 of Regulation XXV of 1802 conferred the proprietary right in the soil on the zamindars and in order to mitigate the abuse of this section, Regulation IV of 1822 was passed which declared that the former regulation was not intended to define, limit, infringe or destroy the actual rights of the tenants. But unfortunately the rights of the peasants were nowhere defined and thus the cultivators were exposed to oppression since the beginning of its introduction until the tenancy reforms of the 20th century.

ORIGINS OF RYOTWARI SYSTEM IN BARAMAHAL

As the collapse of the zamindari system, the success of the Ryotwari system and the anxiety of the East India Company to have more revenue increased the British decided to introduce the Ryotwari system in as many places as possible. The principles of the Ryotwari system were first

formulated in Baramahal and Salem, which were placed under Captain Read and his assistant Thomas Munro in 1792. Captain Read was known to have "an intimate knowledge of the language and manners of the people, and a happy talent for the investigation of everything connected with revenue."[78] To start with, he proposed a lease settlement for five years a period in which he would have sufficient time to complete the survey and assessment of the arable lands. The Board of Revenue recorded at the time that "a thousand advantages must result from a plan of permanency, not only by exciting the people to improvements but by enabling the government to effect a reduction of the revenue officers . . . by reducing in general the charges of collection ; by ensuring regular payments ; by rendering the revenue accounts more simple ; and above all by putting a stop to intrigue and corrupt practices".[79] Read made a detailed enquiry of the state of agriculture and the existing mode of revenue assessment. In his report to the Governor-General he was in favour of giving villages or divisions of districts in perpetual management to their present farmers and to tax away a certain proportion of their rent which would be the same as allowing them a commission upon their collection.[80] Read at first thought that settlement with individual peasants "would be detrimental to cultivation and make revenue precarious."[81] The settlement with wealthy individuals, to start with, was therefore preferred. He had arrived at the gross revenue after checking the village registeres, the ryots' estimates of the produce and the offers of the farmers. He believed that the rent should be half the gross produce in an average year to be paid in money.[82] He stated his principles thus : "The greater the division of the country into farms, the more beneficial to the community and favourable to the population, and the larger the farmers are, to a certain extent, the more certain the increase of cultivation and the receipts of revenue."[83]

While admiring the zeal and devotion with which Read set about his tasks, Munro criticised his master in the following thoughtful words : "Revenue ought not to be all that the subject can pay but only what the necessities of the state require . . . It is neither wise nor just to demand more."[84] This friendly criticism by his able assistant had a salutary effect upon the thinking of Read. He found in 1795 the lease system to be impracticable. He found that the village headmen abused their power and oppressed the peasantry by making extra collections and levying unauthorised perquisites. Therefore, he tried to protect the cultivating ryots by dividing the plots of land among them and establishing the forms of peasant proprietorship. They would thus be "advanced to be proprietors of their own farms and to be more immediately under the collector's protection."[85] The value of every peasant's land was ascertained. He was given a patta (title deed) specifying the extent of his land and the tax to be paid. The total assessment of the village was laid down, and the

village headman who was the collector of revenue was strictly forbidden to meddle with the rates of assessment or the total estimate of revenue. He himself was allotted a plot of ground as remuneration for his duties.[86] This sort of arrangement was made in each of the then divisions, thus attempting the "emancipation of the petty farmers from the control of the intermediate ones."[87] Munro, however, thought that the ryots should be guarded against the oppression of the farmers, by giving them secure and perpetual possession of the land.[88]

Read's alternative settlement was annouced in his circular dated 10th December, 1796. It was decided to fix the assessment of each field permanently. The ryots were now free to "extend or reduce their farms according to their circumstances by retaining or rejecting certain fields as they choose from year to year." Munro strongly criticised the provision for annual changes in the extent of land a ryot might cultivate on the ground that it would discourage long tenures. "After the farmers understand it perfectly, they will prefer annual leases to those of a later date because they give them the same security and advantages, without hindering them from throwing up their lands whenever they can get a better bargain anywhere else."[89] He further suggested a reduction of twenty percent in the assessment of all lands. He also pleaded for handing over possession of land in perpetuity to the ryots, so that such a security will make lands saleable, and "until they shall be saleable, cultivation will never be carried to any high point of perfection nor will revenue be permanent."[90] Both agreed that a permanent money assessment should be fixed on each field and land should be the property of the cultivator. Munro however did not want to permit the ryot the freedom to throw up or take on new fields every year Finally Munro came round to agree with Read on this point in his letter to Read on July 18, 1797.[91] He concluded that larger farmers would be a drag on the security of the revenue. For their failure to pay the stipulated sum would be due not only to failure of crops, but also due to corruption, intrigue and fraudulent practices. Such failures would be a great loss to the state, while the default of a small ryot would reduce the revenue collections by a small amount. "Small farms", he said, "would lessen the number of poor" and "raise a crowd of men of small, but of independent property, who when they are certain, that they will themselves enjoy the benefits of every extraordinary exertion of labour. work with a spirit of activity which would in vain be expected from the tenants or servants of great land holders . . . were there any necessity of making great farmers it could be done by wronging all the petty farmers and diminishing revenue."[92]

The final statement of the principles of the Ryotwari system, communicated by Thomas Munro, is given below, as it is of historic significance and was destined to change the agrarian relations of a large part of the country in the nineteenth century.

"The plan which it appears to me would be best calculated to secure to the people, the fruits of their industry and to government a permanent revenue is comprised under the following heads.

1. A reduction of fifteen percent to be made in the lease assessment.
2. The country to be rented immediately of government by small farmers as at present, everyone receiving just as much land as he demands.
3. Settlements to be annual ; that is, every man to be permitted to give up, or take whatever land he pleases every year.
4. Everyman to have a part or the whole of his land in lease, who wishes it ; and in order to encourage the application for leases, all lands held under annual tenures, to be taken from the occupants and given to such other farmers as may demand them in lease, on their paying to government, as purchase money, one year's rent for any particular field or one half year's rent for the whole farm.
5. Villages and districts to be responsible for all individual failures.
6. All lands included in the lease should remain invariably at the rent then fixed after the proposed reduction of fifteen percent.
7. All lands, not included in the lease, should be rented at the average of the village to which they belong ;
8. Lands included in the lease, being given up and allowed to be waste for any number of years should when again occupied, pay, the very first year, the full rent as before.
9. All castes, whether native or aliens, to pay the same rent for the same land ;
10. No additional rents ever to be demanded for improvements. The farmer, who by digging a well or building a tank, converts dry land into garden or rice fields, to pay no more than the original rent of the ground.
11. No reduction of the established rent ever to be allowed except when the cochineal plant, mulberry, etc., are cultivated".[93]

RYOTWARI SETTLEMENT IN THE CEDED DISTRICTS

On the acquisition of the Ceded Districts by the treaty of October, 12, 1800, the East India Company set about the task of reorganizing the administration of the territories. Thomas Munro was appointed Principal Collector with four subordinate Assistant Collectors.[94] Thomas Munro was now presiding over a country which had been impoverished by the famines of 1792 and 1793 coupled with the depredations of the hordes of poligars, military adventures, the Mysore wars and the Nizam's administration.[95]

On his assumption of office he had to deal with eighty poligars and their thirty thousand peons. They were at first in no mood to recognize the supremacy of the Company administration. Their original duties to *resist and put down robbers, to bring offenders to justice and to make good the loss of stolen property, thus exercising civil and military jurisdiction,* had faded out.[96] Despite their depredations they could not be subdued by the Nawabs of Cuddaph, Hyderabad, Tippu Sultan or even the Marathas.[97] Munro was asked by the Madras Government to appreciate the advantage to be expected from the continuance of hereditary possessions to the descendants of ancient families.[98] Munro on the other hand believed that unless he put down the poligars he would not be able to go ahead with the organisation of revenue administration. He preferred to wait, till his administration was established, and for an opportunity to declare them rebels before crushing them.[99] As a first step he raised the revenue assessment on the poligars with a view to making it uneconomical for them to keep their troops.[100] He changed the peshkush into a land rent. And finally he asked General Campbell to reduce their military strength for opposing the Company's Government.[101] He then issued a proclamation to the poligars of Ceded Districts and then sent out Campbell to supress them.[102] By the beginning of 1802, Munro was able to report that he had reduced the poligars and dispossessed them. Though there were some minor poligars who continued their hit and run tactics, there was no insurrection of any considerable force.[103]

The court of Directors disapproved of his policy of violent suppression of the poligars. They wanted to follow a policy of moderation and conciliation to ensure the future fidelity of the poligars.[104] Munro strongly defended his action. He wrote that the poligars if reinstated would never become anything like country gentlemen which the term zamindar has often erroneously been said to imply.[105]

THE SETTLEMENT OF REVENUE

Th very first settlement was a village settlement. The heads of villages had to collect the revenue from the peasants and pay a lumpsum to the government, leaving the surplus to the headmen as remuneration for collections. The headmen were not considered as landlords, though they had inams for their subsistence.[106] Munro was not in favour of handing over villages to headmen, for then "they would take advantage of the present possession and endeavour to enrich themselves by opressing the tenants."[107] But his ryotwari system introduced later led to a settlement which provided for the elimination of the intermediary farmers of revenue. Every ryot held his land from the government and was given a patta or title deed. The revenue was regulated by the quality of the land and the condition of the cultivation. The revenue varied from two-fifths to three-fifth of the produce, and the value was reckoned in money.[108] Munro was emphatic

about the extirpation of the poligars and the elimination of the farmers for he believed that the final power of regulating assessment and collection should belong to the Government, in order to maximise revenue collection and infuse confidence in the ryots.[109] With this object in view Munro began a survey of all lands in the Ceded Districts and completed it in 1806. The first report of Munro dated November 30, 1806 describes this mode of settlement before the completion of the survey. The second report dated July 26, 1807 describes this survey and the assessment based on it. In the beginning, therefore, the headman ascertained which lands each ryot wanted to cultivate. He permitted the ryots to relinquish lands not required by them, and such lands were given to needy ryots. The rents were fixed at a later stage by the collector, after estimating the yield of the crop. The Tahsildar visited each village, supervised the cultivation in villages, made advances to poorer ryots, for purchasing seed, ploughs and cattle. He assembled the ryots in the respective villages and ascertained the lands held by the ryots. He took an account of occupied and unoccupied lands. He toured again to find out the conditions of the crops.[110] Then the Collector went on his tour in September-October, assembled the ryots in a few villages, and estimated the crops, comparing the information with the data supplied by the Tahsildars and the village officers. He compared them with past accounts and made the final assessment. The full rent of waste lands was collected only if they had been in cultivation from 2 to 7 years. He granted remission where the crops were bad, but it was very rarely made. Then the Collector granted each ryot a patta which contained the extent of the land and the rents for the year. This settlement was conducted in all the villages within a month or five weeks.[111] Under ryotwari system the ryot "has the advantage of knowing . . . fixed rents of the different fields . . . their total amount . . . limit of his rent not only for the present but for every succeeding year."[112]

LAND SURVEY, CLASSIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

During 1802-1807 Munro concluded a survey of the Ceded Districts. Though it is said to be not so good as the modern survey, parties of six to ten surveyors headed by an Inspector measured all land, roads, sites of towns and villages, beds of tanks and rivers, wastes and forests Names and numbers were assigned to all cultivable fields. They used a standard measure, a chain of 33 feet. Four square chains made an acre.[113] The assessors followed them, two of them for each area measured by ten surveyors. Accompanied by the headman and the ryots he went to the fields and classified them according to quality. Wet lands were subdivided into five or six classes, and dry lands into eight or ten classes. The classification was based on local opinion. The work of the assessors was supervised by head assessors.[114] The classification was then examined in the collector's office in the presence of the ryots, patels and karnams. "The business

was began by fixing the sum which was to be the total revenue of the *district . . . by comparing the collection under the native* princes, under the company's Government from its commencement, the estimates of the ordinary, and head assessors and the opinions of the most intelligent natives."[115] The assessment *of the whole district was fixed* and then the assessment of each village *was examined. Remissions were granted* where necessary and this loss was made good in prosperous villages.

By 1802, he settled the assessment of 208918 independent farmers and gave them "cowles' or engagements.[116] The collections amounted to 14, 13, 614 star pagodas which showed an increase of 29,100 pagodas over the previous year.[117] Munro thought that the peasants were impoverished and should not have been pressed so hard to maximise revenue collections.[118] But he preferred the direct settlement with individual peasants in the larger interests of the state and society.[119]

Munro believed that the ryots should be allowed to take up as much land as their resources permitted or to give up land according to their "circumstances". He suggested a reduction of 25 percent in the survey assessment and 30 percent of the assessment on the cultivation of waste lands. He proposed that every ryot should be given perpetual ownership of the land so long as he paid the customary assessment.[120] This procedure of settlement would make land saleable in about twenty to twenty-five years. Munro thought that only after lands became saleable the creation of private property in land would be a great benefit to the ryots.[121] At the beginning of 1807 Munro reported the completion of survey and desired the Government to retain unoccupied land to regulate its distribution.[122] He forecast that the Ceded Districts would yield 18 lakhs of pagodas in course of time under the ryotwari system.[123] The principles on which he reiterated the ryotwari settlement are given below.[124]

1. The settlement shall be ryotwari.
2. The amount of the settlement shall increase or decrease according to the extent of the land in cultivation.
3. A reduction of twenty-five percent on all land shall be made in the survey rate of assessment.
4. An additional reduction of eight percent or thirty-three percent in all shall be allowed on all lands watered by wells or by water raised by machinery from rivers . . . provided the cultivators keep the wells or embankments in repair at their own expense. A similar reduction shall be allowed on the lands watered by small tanks, whenever the cultivators agree to bear the expense of repairs.
5. Every ryot shall be at liberty at the end of every year to throw up a part of his land or to occupy more according to his circumstances, but whether he throws up or occupies, he shall not be permitted to select but shall take a rigid proportional shares

of the good and bad together.

6. Every ryot as long as he pays the rent of his land, shall be considered as the complete owner of the soil, and shall be at liberty to let it to a tenant without any hesitation as to rent and to sell it as he pleases.
7. No remissions shall be made on ordinary occasions, for bad crops or other accidents, should failures occur, which cannot be made good from the property or land of the defaulters, the villages in which they happen, shall be liable for them to the extent of ten percent, additional on the rent of the remaining ryots but no further.
8. All unoccupied land shall remain in the hands of the Government and rent of whatever part of it may be hereafter cultivated shall be added to the public revenue.

THE EFFECTS OF THE LAND REVENUE SYSTEMS

The East India Company had a monopoly of Indian trade, whose main object was "to secure a supply of the products of India and the East Indies (especically spices, cotton goods and silk goods) which formed a ready market in England and Europe."[125] The company used its sovereign power in India to extract through the new revenue settlements the maximum revenue to be used as 'annual investments' which gave them large dividends in European markets. But the free traders and the manufacturing class attacked the Company and alleged that it was more interested in extracting tribute than in advancing the interests of British industry. They demanded an end to its commercial functions and the reorganization of the revenue administration to make India as "an agrarian hinterland" in order to serve the interests of the capitalists of Britain.

It is the interests of the Company and those of the free traders and manufacturing classes that led to the introduction of new revenue settlements in the form of zamindari, mahalwari, village and ryotwari settlements in India. Thus, the type of British rule and the principles and working of the revenue systems were pre-determined with the object of serving the interests of the Company which needed perpetual and rising sources of revenue and those of the British capitalists who were desirous to extend cultivation through the new revenue systems and to make this extended cultivation serve their industrial needs. This means that getting higher revenue or benefits was the object of the British and to achieve these ends they used the new revenue systems.[126]

Even more important than the actual increase in the burden of the assessments in the initial period was the revolution in the system of assessments and the registration of the ownership of land in which English economic and legal conceptions were made to replace, or were superimposed on the entirely different conceptions and institutions of the traditional

Indian economy. The latter were now replaced by the system of fixed money payments assessed on land, regularly due in cash irrespective of the year's production, in good or bad harvests, and whether more or less of the land was cultivated or not and, in the overwhelming majority of settlements, fixed on individual land holders, whether direct cultivators or landlords appointed by the state.[127] *This payment was commonly spoken* of as 'rent', thus revealing that the peasantry had become in fact tenants, whether directly of the state or of the state-appointed landlords, even though at the same time possessing certain proprietary and traditional rights. The introduction of the English landlord system, individual landholding, mortgage and sale of lands, and of English legal conceptions alien to Indian economy and administered by an alien rule which combined in itself, legislative, executive and judicial functions, completed the process. By this transformation the British assumed ultimate possession of the land, converting the peasantry into tenants, and landlords into an aristocracy, who could both equally be ejected for failure of payment.[128] The previous self-governing village community was robbed of its economic functions, as well as of its administrative role.[129]

The ryotwari system, no less than the zamindari system cut right through Indian institutions. Indeed, the Madras Board of Revenue at the time fought a long and losing battle against it, and urged instead a collective settlement with the village communities, known as a Mauzzawari settlement. They wrote "we find them (British officers) . . . dissolving the . . . Hindu village, and newly assessing and parcelling out the lands, . . . professing to limit their demand to each field, but in fact, by establishing such limit as unattainable maximum, assessing the ryot at discretion . . . binding the ryot by force to the plough, compelling him to till land acknowledged to be over-assessed, dragging him back to it if he absconded . . . taking from him all . . . and leaving him nothing but his bullocks and seed grain."[130]

Thus the life of the peasants was positioned between two sets of oppressors, one hereditary and native, and another, the intruding and foreign, viz. the zamindars and the poligars on the one hand and the Company on the other.[131] The peasant, threfore, suffered due to rack-renting and over assessment irrespective of the type of settlement that was in operation. At the commencement of the ryotwari settlement, "the tax was determined in a somewhat rough-and ready manner," which was supposed to have been rectified later.[132] The cultivating expenses and other miscellaneous taxes to be paid by people left them with very nominal amounts barely enough for their sustenance.[133]

As a result revenue defalcations became a regular feature in the Ceded districts. But the Board of Revenue insisted on ruthless collections irrespective of what happened to the ryot.[134] The revenue collections in the Ceded districts rose steeply. In 1800-1801 it was Rs. 12 lakhs and

within one year in 1801-1802 it rose to Rs. 17 lakhs and to 18 lakhs i 1802-1803 and by 1804-1805 to Rs. 23 lakhs.[135] Munro was, therefor obliged to recommend remissions, but they were stalled by the Board c Revenue.[136] The Madras presidency was the most heavily taxed in matte of land revenue. It was calculated that for every one lakh of populatio the amount collected as land revenue was Rs. 10,05,455 in Benga Rs. 16,71,965 in Bombay and Rs. 23,12,465 in Madras.[137]

Savage methods of torture were employed to collect revenues fro people and afraid of the dire consequences, they never complained of it.[1] The attitude of the Company was aptly described by Lord Macaula "Govern leniently, but send us more money, practice justice and moder tion, but send us more money, be the father and oppressor of the peopl be just and unjust, moderate and rapacious."[139] As a rusult rural i debtedness increased throwing ryots to the mercy of village 'sahuka (moneylenders).[140]

On the other hand agriculture was in a bad shape with its hea dependency upon the vagaries of the monsoon, infertile soil, outdat implements and little or no encouragement in the shape of taccavi loa to the peasants either from the government or the zamindars.[141] Moreov the condition of irrigation works was far from satisfactory.[142] The famin added to the wretchedness of the agricultural population including tenan weavers and agricultural labourers.

The permanent settlement with its concepts of land ownership a a permanent assessment, was envisaged to stimulate industry promo agriculture and augument the general wealth and prosperity.[143] It conferr ownership of the land upon the former feudal intermediaries who he political and revenue powers over large tracts of land.[144] The sponsc of the settlement did not care who the land owner was, so long as it w cultivated and land revenue was regularly paid.[145] Unfortunately t rights of the peasants were nowhere defined, and thus the cultivators we exposed to oppression.[146] The zamindars never showed interest in eith the improvement of land or agricultural production. The settleme contrary to expectations, did not introduce capitalistic farming in Inc (It only made ryots dependent on the zamindars.[147]) On the other ha several estates were either auctioned or surrendered because of the inabili of the zamindars to pay peshcush.[148] Thus the failure of the permane settlement in the Northern Circars led to misrule and anarchy in t sphere of revenue administration.

On the other hand under the ryotwari system, the benefit of eve ryot, being a peasant proprietor at a fixed assessment, proved illuso The fault lay mainly in the overassessment of land and exacting deman of the administration.[149] This made agriculture completely unremunerati and prevented the formation of capital within the agricultural econon Also it blocked the way of the flow of outside capital entering into t

agricultural sector.[150] Peasants who were *in acute need of cash to pa; land revenues, fell into the hands of "Sahukars" (Moneylenders) wh became de-facto landlords. In many instances the money lender and the landlords were one and the same.*[151] *Vincent Smith says that "the rural population wanted two things, first a light assessment, secondly the minimum of official interference"*[151-A] *It is very difficult to resist the* conclusion that the Company's revenue policy failed to achieve both these. This probably accounts for the delay in the emergence of a powerful middle class during the early British rule in spite of the introduction of English education in India.

Moreover lack of a proper study of the customs and institutions in the villages, the base of the revenue structure, resulted in failure of successfully implementing the settlements.[152] Apart from these the British administrators during the first quarter of the 19th century were influenced by utilitarian ideas which to a large extent influenced the official policy of Indian land revenue.[153] Pressed to pay land revenue in cash the peasants not only borrowed money but also took to the production of cash crops and were thus exposed to the fluctuations of money market.[154] The legal system introduced by the British also brought far reaching changes in the agricultural sector. Now poor peasants were placed at the mercy of courts where money lenders could get favourable decisions by engaging lawyers.[155] Another thing introduced by the British was the system of eviction from land. Earlier, peasants could not be evicted from their lands as the traditional village system was relatively considerate to them. Thus, the break-up of the old political and economic order had a deep impact on society,[156] The conquerors of India prior to the East India Company rule "had effected no more than political change but England had struck at the heart of the social system in Indian village".[157] The English dissolved them not only by blowing up their economical basis but also by their commercial enterprises.[158] It is this changing nature of the land revenue policy of the company that made Baden-Powell sum up the situation as follows : "The revenue chapter . . . a record of a series of experiments in assessment ; reduction and enhancements, changes in one direction and another following each other in somewhat bewildering order."[159]

1. It was first on the basis of the plunder of India by merchant capital in the second half of the 18th century that modern England was built up. This transformed India from an exporter to importer of cotton goods and finally leading to exploitation by industrial capital (R. Palme Dutt, *India To-day* Calcutta, 1970 Second Indian edition), pp. 99, 108-10 & 112. Eric Stokes (ed) *The peasant and the Raj* New Delhi, 1978, p. 27, Sarojini Regani, *Highlights of the Freedom Movement in Andhra Pradesh* Hyderabad, 1972, p. 14).
2. "It (colonialism) is a well-structured 'whole', a distinct social formation (system) or sub-formation (sub-system) in which the basic control of the econmy and society

s in the hands of a foreign capitalist class which functions in the colony (or semi-colony) through a dependent and subservient economic, social, political and intellectual structure whose forms can vary with the changing conditions of the historical development of capitalism as a worldwide system." Bipan Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India* (New Delhi, 1979) p. 26.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
4. *Ibid.*, p 25.
5. J.S. Furnivall, Colonial policy and Practice (1956, reprint), cited in Bipan Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
6. Ramakrishna Mukherjee, *The Rise and Fall of the East India Company* (Berlin, 1955) p. 231.
7. M. Pattabhirama Reddy (hereafter mentioned as M.P.R.) *East India Company in Andhra with special refrence to Agrarian Relations, 1757-1857* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, 1981, a copy secured from the author), p. 153.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 154 & 204.
9. Eric Stokes, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
10. *Preamble of Regulation II of 1793, Bengal Regulations.*
11. R. Palme Dutt, *op cit.*, p. 116.
12 Shiva Kumar, *Peasantry and the Indian National Movement* (Meerut, 1979-80), p. 19.
13. Sunil Sen, *Agrarian Relations in India, 1793-1947*, (New Delhi, 1979) p. 1-2.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
15. M.P.R., *op. cit.*, p. 258.
16. *Ibid.*, *p. 170.*
17. *Ibid.*, p. 182.
18. Robert Eric Frykenberg, *Guntur District (1788-1848). A History of local infuence and central Authority in South India*, (Oxford, 1965) p. 66.
19 Bipan Chadra, *op. cit.*, p. 433.
20. M.P.R. *op. cit.*, pp. 166 & 171.
21. *Colonel Read to the Board of Revenue, 12th October, 1974.*
22. *Revenue Despatches to England*, vol. 8, 23rd March, 1804, pp. 62-65.
23. *Munro the Wellesley, 10th July, 1802.*
24. *The Fifth report* (hereafter mentioned F.R.) edited by Walter Kelly Firminger *of the selected committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company, 28th July, 1812 Calcutta, 1918, vol. I* F.R. p. 124, A.V. Ramana Rao, *the Economic Development of Andhra Pradesh*, 1766-1957, (Bombay, 1958), p. 80.
25. M.P.R., *op. cit.*, p. 202.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
27. *Munro to Government*, 18th March, 1801, 3rd April, 1801, 27th March, 1801, 1st April, 1801, *Munro to Webb*, 6th April, 1801, *Government to Campbell*, 3rd April, 1801, *Munro to Board of Revenue* 22nd Feb. 1803, 4th April, 1805
28. *Minute of the Board of Revenue* dated 11th June 1855 gives the fluctuating price list of paddy etc. from 1801 to 1834.
29. Bipan Chandra, *Rise and growth of Economic Nationalism in India*, (New Delhi, 1965) pp. 403-4
30. *Munro to Captain Road, 5th September*, 1797, J B.W. Dykes, *Salem, An Indian Collectorate* (Madras, 1853) pp. 164-6.
31. Shiva Kumar, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
32. Bishop Heber, *Memoirs and correspondence*, (1830), vol. II, p. 413.
33 M.P.R., *op. cit*, p. 153.
34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*, p. 154.
36. F.R. *op. cit*, vol. I, p. 14.
37. Ross, Cornwallis, vol. I, pp. 552-7, cited in M.P.R , *op. cit.*, p. 155.
38. George D. Bearce, *British Attitudes towards India, 1784-1858* (London, 1916) p. 45
39. *Ibid.*
40. James Mill *The History of British India*, Book. VI. chapter I (London 1848). p. 492
41. *Section VII. Article Sixth, Regulation I, 1793, in Bengal Regulations.*
42. A.D. Campbell, *Papers on Land Revenue of India in Report of Select Committee o East India Affairs 1832*, Vol. VIII, Appendix p. 15.
43. *Section VIII, Act. VI, col 5 Regulation I of 1793, Bengal Regulations.*
44. Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
45. *Preamble of Regulation II of 1793 op. cit.*
46. F.R., *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 542.
47. *Cornwallis to the Court of Directors, 6th March, 1793*, Amles Tripathi, *Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency, 1793-1833*, (Calcutta, 1956), p. 18.
48. Amles Tripathi, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-36.
49. S. Gopal *The Parmanent Settlement in Bengal and its results* (London 1949) p. 17.
50. *Ibid.*
51. Firminger's Historical introduction to F.R., vol. I, *op. cit.*
52. *Ibid.*
54. F.R. *op. cit.*, p. 109, *Revenue Consultations*, 3rd October, 1794 *Revenue Despatches to England*, No. 3, 18th October, 1794, Paras 16-177, *Revenue despatches from England* 4th October, 1797, Board's consultations Nos. 11 & 12, 21st May, 1798, para 35.
55. *Board's consultations* No. 2, 2nd September, 1799, pp. 30-47.
56. *Revenue* Consultations 4th September, 1799, *Revenue Despatches to England*, 22nd January, 1800.
57. *Board's Consultations*, 2nd September, 1799, No. 2, pp. 30-47.
58. *Revenue Despatch to Eugland*, 9th October, 1800, vol. 7 p. 49.
59. *Revenue Despatches from England*, 11th February, 1801.
60 *Revenne Despatches to England*, 19th March, 1802, vol. 7 para 82.
61. *Revenue Despatches to England*, 9th March, 1802, 29th May, 1802, and 3rd August, 1802.
62. *Revenue Despatches to England*, 27th March, 1804, para 52.
63 *Ibid.*, para 75.
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*ASHOK K. UPADHYAY**

Colonial Economy and Variations in Tribal Exploitation A Comparative Study in Thana and Khandesh Districts c 1818-1940

THE BASIC theme of this paper is to highlight the variations in the subsumption of tribals in Thana and Khandesh districts during the British period. Even as the colonial economy universalized contracts in land and labour, the specificities of tribal existence in the two districts and the conditions of the local economics in general shaped the particular land relations that emerged during the colonial period and created the peculiar 'sites' occupied by the tribals in the two regions. In some crucial respects however there were common elements that can be discerned in the structure of property relations and their reproduction in the respective areas.

Section I of the paper highlights some crucial elements of the pre-British economy and tribal existence in the two regions. Section II highlights aspects of the colonial economy that generated the forces leading to the differential impact on tribals. Even as tribal pauperisation was officially recognized, some aspects of the colonial culture legitimised such pauperisation in perspectives that are existent to this day.

I

KHANDESH AND THANA IN THE PRE-BRITISH PERIOD

Dhule and Jalgaon districts make up the Khandesh region of Maharashtra Khandesh is bounded on the west by Gujarat and in the east by the Vidarbha part of Maharashtra. In the south it is bounden by the Nasik district and the Marathwada part of Maharashtra In the northern part it borders on Madhya Pradesh. The Tapi Basin that we are concentrating upon lies in the north-west of Dhule district comprising talukas of Shahade, Talode and Nandurbar.

The Tapi river flows east-west across the district cutting the district into two almost equal halves. It forms a basin from the beginning of the

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Shahade taluka which broadens into a strip of extremely fertile plain of about 15 to 20 miles in width at its broadest. In the north of the Shahade and Talode talukas, the plains end with the steep rise of the Satpuda mountains which form ridge after ridge of rising mountains. Most of the parts of Akkalkuwa taluka which bounds the Talode taluka on the west is taken up by the Satpudas with a relatively narrow strip of the north-west basin included in its southern region. The Nandurbar taluka lies to the south of the Tapi. Here the plains end with a slow rise and increasingly rocky soil to end into the Sahyadri and Galna hills in the south-west. The Nawapur taluka which bounds Nandurbar taluka to the west lies entirely in this slow rise with a sparse forest covering a large part.

European travellers in the 16th century had described Khandesh as a rich and well peopled country yielding great abundance of grain, cotton wool and sugar with a big market for dry fruits. The husbandmen described by them were the Kunbis, the Bhils and the Gond Adivasis as the main class of cultivators.[1] Contemporary Moghul records showed that the area north of the Tapi (comprising the Shahde-Taloda region today) was exclusively peopled and tilled by the Adivasi tribal population *settled on land*[2], and ruled by the Moghuls through Rajput, Muslim as well as Maratha feudatories alongside the Adivasi chieftains.[3]

It is however relevent to point out that the prosperity of the region, indicated also by the high revenues of some talukas,[4] was not predicated on the production of Adivasi cultivated lands. It was the crucial position of Khandesh on trade routes and the production of non-Adivasi cultivators on the fertile plains that contributed to the prosperity of the region. The importance of Khandesh as a nodal point in the trade-route in fact antedated Mughal rule. But it was during the relative administrative peace following Moghul sovereignty that Khandesh's towns became important links in the trade both within and without the country,[5] forming as they did the confluence of the north-south trade along the Agra road and the east-west through Nandurbar. Adivasi existence formed a relatively autonomous enclave in the region tolerated in times of peace and stable trade movements.

But not for long ; for the very strategic position of Khandesh on the trade routes turned into the basis both for the ruin of Khandesh on the trade routes turned into the basis both for the ruin of Khandesh's prosperity and the oppression of the local peasantry—including the hitherto isolated Adivasis.[6] Internecine wars between the Moghuls and Marathas and then amongst the latter feudatories had two principal effects on the local peasantry. The non-Adivasi peasantry both in the wake of, and anticipating, attacks on their property, emigrated from the area, relieved of not merely loss to life, but the whole gamut of vexatious taxes imposed on them, consequent to the 'farming' system practised by the Marathas. The Adivasi peasantry having no other 'homeland' to flee to, turned

'marauders'. *In the general collapse of administration, caught in th crossfire of the inter-feudatory wars, the tribals took to the hills and form of social banditry that was to spill over two decades of early British rule.*

In Thana district the pre-British situation of the tribals was quite different. The region contained both hilly and plain areas but it was the latter that drew the attention of pre-British powers from the Moghuls to the Portuguese and the Marathas. Travellers in the talukas of Bassein, Salsette and Kalyan at varying points of time remarked on the fluctuating prosperity of the local peasantry—all non-tribals—the flourishing trade and the luxury of the landed gentry.[7] But the hilly talukas of Dahanu, Umbergaon parts of Mahim, Wada and almost the whole of Mokhada, densely populated by tribals, drew scant notice—not in the least because of their inaccessibility and their relatively low economic importance. Under such conditions the tribals in these areas constituting between 61.1 percent of total population in Dahanu to 26.8 per cent in Murbad in 1890,[8] were isolated to a far greater degree from 'mainstream' society than their Khandesh counterparts. The denseness of hills, forests secured the tribals a near total inaccessibility and discouraged the advance of any trade routes through the areas. Cut off from society the tribals in these regions, the principal ones being the Katkari, the Varli and Dhodia, lived in conditions of natural economy—producing coarse grain through shifting cultivation just enough for family reproduction, and supplementing their diet with fruits gathered from the forests.[9]

The differences in conditions of tribal existence and the differing of communication with the mainstream economy shaped the tribals' responses to the land settlements that the British introduced in both the areas ; and in turn prejudiced both official response to their productive capacity (as labourers or producers) and the modes of exploitation by the landed gentry. But such responses were the immediate consequence of the nature of the colonial economy, to which we may now turn our attention.

II

THE BRITISH PERIOD

On assuming political power in Western India after their defeat of the Marathas in 1818, the British were beset by two principal problems in both districts. One was to account for the multifarious taxes and revenues (as well as modes of land assessment) that had been levied by various feudatories at varying points, accumulating like a palimpsest on the peasantry ; the second was to settle the singularly largest element of the local population that fell outside the pole of any regular system of revenue assessment—the tribals.

The problems in Khandesh were compounded by the intensity of disorder and lawlessness that the British inherited. The internecine warfare had ravaged the countryside leaving behind only memories of former prosperity.[10] The tribals i.e. the Bhils were the most ferocious of the "bandits". Thus the problem of settling the tribals on land in Khandesh assumed politico-military forms along with the economic. The first two decades of British rule in Khandesh witnessed a considerable deployment of arms and men to subdue the Bhils ; together with policies of economic concession designed to win favour. It was only when a part of the tribal population was drafted into service under the banner of the Bhil Corps, created to fight and subdue Bhil "gangs" or "marauders" that the British were able, in some measure, to pacify the "restive" populace. By 1828, the Collector could report on the relative peace and quiet in the area "for the first time in twenty years".[11] The simultaneous problem of restoring the economy of Khandesh took longer. The initial policy of maintaining some of the earlier structure of assessments but at a lower level did not pay dividends. Tillage did not improve with the thirty per cent reduction in rates. In 1852 when Captain Wingate undertook the first systematic survey of lands in the area he found that only 14 per cent of the estimated arable land was under tillage. About 25 per cent of the villages stood completely deserted.[12]

In Thana district the British spent the first four decades gathering information on the nature of assessment which tended to differ, often from one taluka to another :[13] and attempted a revival of agricultural production to a level sufficiently profitable for the raiyat to pay his revenue charge (many of which had been reduced in 1836-40), and maintain his level of expenditure/investment.[14]

For the British, the tribals constituted the dark and ignoble savages inhabiting a territory which was inaccessible[15] ; but which held the promise of future colonization and potential revenue. But the districtwise reduction of extant revenue charges did not affect the tribal areas ; and the lack of hegemony over such a large portion of the district, inhabited by tribals who almost "belonged to another country"[16] was the subject of official correspondence in the first four decades of British rule

By 1852 both Khandesh and Thana were subject to survey operations under the supervision of Captain Wingate and his lieutenant, Captain Francis.

In Thana district it took twelve years for the survey and classification of lands to be completed. By 1865 the remoter areas of Dahanu, Mokhada, Wada and Mahim had been surveyed and plots earmarked for tribal settlement. Necessarily, the survey rules for the presidency, adumbrated in the Joint Report of 1848[17] for the classification and allotment of lands had to be modified in a district where half the population lived off shifting cultivation and areas were hitherto unassessed or classified The tribals were

allotted varkas (uplands growing grain) plots and accounting for th
"half-degraded" condition were assigned very low rates of revenue.[18] B
the problem lay in the fact that theoretical systems of classification eve
with modifications, did not accord with the geography of the hill district
It was very difficult to demarcate varkas lands from forests land or *ra*
lands i.e. communal lands lying on the fringes of forests used for manur
making or cattle grazing. To the extent that forests were not strictl
demarcated it was difficult to settle the tribals ; and in the first ten yea
after the Original Survey of the 1850s, Collectors and their Assistants wer
hard pui to convince the tribals to settle down to sedentary agriculture o
demarcated lands.[19]

In Khandesh the phenomenon was similar ; but for entirely differen
reasons By the 1850s survey operations had commenced and at least a
as far as the fertile Tapi basin was concerned, the lands classified. Th
administrative control and attendant peace coupled with the new lan
assessments had attracted a large number of migrant peasantry, especiall
the Gujar cultivators from the Gujarat and Marwar areas. Concerne
with quick colonisation and a rapid increase in agricultural productior
especially of *cotton*, Gujar peasant cultivators were encouraged by the lo
rates of revenue and a stable administration to colonise more lands tha
could be tilled with family labour. The trickling stream of migratio
before the 1850s had broadened into a torrent by 1864—the height of th
cotton boom in Bombay Presidency, consequent on the American Civil Wa
—and was reflected in the rapid increase of tillage, from a bare 7 to 9 pe
cent in 1852 to 72 per cent in Nandurbar, 60 per cent in Shahade and 7
per cent in Talode talukas by 1878.[20]

The policy of settling the tribals i.e. Bhils—had resulted in thei
colonisation of lands north of the Tapi basin ; and while the fertile plain
along the Tapi river were being converted into fertile cotton lands, th
area settled by Adivasis still gave the appearance of an "uninhabite
forest". In fact these lands were *not* forests in the real sense of the word
but fertile arable lands overgrown with bushes and trees ; and th
Bhils, content to live off the land had not acquired the propensity no
the capital of the Gujar kulak to convert the land into an exchangeabl
commodity.

Increasing commercialisation of crops—wheat, cotton, sugarcane,—
led to the expansion of the land market, with the Gujar in the lead, an
an attendant problem arose creating the basis for the initial subsumption o
the Bhils by the landed gentry. This was connected with a "shortage o
labour," consequent on the overcoming of the problem of scarcity o
tillage. Supported by colonial laws of contract and their own ignorance
the tribals provided the material basis for meeting this labour shortage
through a combination of cunning usury and pure fraud on the part of th
Gujar kulak. In other words, unlike in Thana where the premise fo

tribal settlement on lands was partly undercut by the conditions of the hill areas, in Khandesh the possibilities for tribal settlement were vitiated by the needs of the labour market—into which the tribals were manipulated.[21]

Apart from kulak cunning and colonial laws, the enclosure of forests consequent to the implementation by the Bombay Government of the Indian Forest Act, hastened the process of tribal subsumption in both areas—in directions that pre-dated the Act. The provisions of the Act declared a major portion of the forests both in Thana and Khandesh as Reserved or Protected and rendered any usage of its produce or cultivation of the demarcated areas, cognizable offences.[22]

The effect of the enclosure of forests in the two areas of Thana and Khandesh was to further disposses the tribal population of an alternate means of sustenance[23] and drive them into the conditions of sedentary agriculture and the emergent land relations. In Khandesh the movement of the tribals wiped off the shortage of labour. Although the movement was protracted, by 1917 the percentage of share croppers and labourers (farm servants and field labourers) was 35.2 per cent and 39.7 per cent respectively. The corresponding figures in 1898 had been 2.8 per cent and 12.6 per cent for the two categories.[24] In Thana district the dual process of land rights and forest enclosures which should have, theoretically, made the tribal a settled peasant, in fact, turned him into a tenant. And if the predominance of labour service for the kulak marked the 'site' of the Bhil in Khandesh, it was as a tenant to the dominant moneylender/landlord combine that the Varli tribal in Thana district became situated. Thus between 1916-17 and 1946-47, tenancy amongst the Varlis in the three talukas of Dahanu, Umbergaon, and Mahim had increased by 199 per cent, while in other areas not so densely populated with tribals it increased by 43 per cent in the same period.[25]

Such differences in the 'positions' of the tribals in the property relations had their basis in the crop pattern of the two areas. In Khandesh the commercialisation of cotton and wheat called for the concentration of lands and the availability of cheap labour. All the more so, since consequent to the "Cotton Famine" faced by Lancashire, the Bombay Government was experimenting with long staple cotton offering incentives to cotton growers for the use of American seeds.[26] In Thana the commercial imperative influenced landlords/moneylenders who had subsumed the Varlis in a vicious debt cycle to convert their lands growing varkas crops like *jowari* millets into 'producing' grass which required little or no capital but yielded lucrative returns in the markets of Bombay. In 1896 the Revisian Survey officials remarked on the flourishing grass trade and its growth, especially in Mahim and Dahanu talukas on both sides of the Bombay Baroda and Central India Railway line.[27] The fact that this "prosperity" was predicated on the "regrettable feature" of an "increase in indebtedness and transfer of lands from the cultivating to the money-

lending classes, especially so amongst the Varlis, did not escape tl attention of officials busy calculating the enhancement of revenue rates.[28]

The differential 'positions' occupied by the tribals in the two area were however realised through a common agency—indebtedness ;[29] an reproduced themselves through the singular use or threat of, force o extra-economic coercion. In Thana if the the prodominance of violence,[30] in Khandesh, the labour force was reproduced through mortgage in labou that in effect amounted to slavery.[31]

In effect the subsumption of the tribals in Thana and Khandesh wa: operationalised through a singular agency—usury capital aided anc abetted by colonial laws of contract. But the positions of the tribals differed. In Thana the Varlis and Katakaris—the former accounting for nearly 50 per cent of the total tribal population were by and large transformed into tenants; whereas the Bhils of Khandesh were to a large extent reduced to slave labour. While some discerning British officials were perceptive enough to recognise the fact that the basis for this subsumption lay in the nature of their laws and the markets created by commercialisation,[32] it is significant that the reasons for the readily accepted fact of tribal exploitation were located in the tribals themselves. In Thana, the Varlis plight was explained in terms of their laziness, slothfulness, propensity to drink and incapacity for hard work.[33] Such "characteristics" first listed as 'observations'[34] gradually acquired a heuristic value as officials were hard put to explain the apparent contradiction of increasing prosperity (measured in terms of resale value of land as multiples of revenue assessment) and the increasing pauperisation of the tribals.[35] Not surprisingly such legitimisations of tribals' exploitation passed off as the generally accepted *perspective* with which the tribals were viewed.[36] It would finally take the organised movements of the Varlis under Godavari Parulekar from 1946 onwards and the struggles of the Bhils in Khandesh from the 1970s onwards to overthrow this epistemological albatross.[37]

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27 *SBG-CCCXCVIII*, p. 9. Cf Opinion of British Officials thirty years before, on the inferior quality of grass in the Thana taluka. *R. D 1864/136*, p. 14
28 *SBG* : *CCCXCVIII*, p. 125, 138. Also Cf. *SBG . CCXCIII* passim . The Collector's correspondence on Varli land transfers in Dahanu taluka. *R.D 1898/107*, pp. 16-25 ; 28-37.
29 For Thana see *R D. 1903/23*, pp 55-6 for a graphic description of usurious mechanisms *K.J. Save* 'The Varlis' *Padma Publications, Bombay, 1945*, p. 135 for indebtedness in the 1930's For Khandesh see *op. cit , GBP-XII* pp. 197-8.
30 *R.D. 1901/57*, p. 14 ; also *D.M. Eymbatton op cit.*, pp 170, 164-7, 172-3. Also *GBP-XII., op. cit* , pp. 197-99.
32. J P. Orr, (Collector of Thana 1896-1900) citied in *D. Symington.*, 1935, p. 47
33. *R.D. 1878/143*, p. 443 also *R.D. 1865/26*, p. 260.
34. *J. Wilson.* "An Account of the Warlis and Kathodis-Two of the Forest Tribes of N. Konkan". *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Saciety of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 7, 1843, London.* passim.
35. *R.D. 1880/29*, p. 116 ; Cf. *R.D. 1901/57*, p. 13.
36. *K.J. Save, op cit*, p. 203. Cf. G. Parulekar who ironically expresses similar views. *G. Parulekar* 'Adivasi Revolt', National Book Agency, *Calcutta, 1975*, p. 58.
37. *Sulabha Brahme and A. Upadhyaya* "A Critical Analysis of the Social Formation and Peasant Resistance in Maharashtra. 3 Vols. ..e Vol. VI, Pune. 1979 (Unpublished).

Speculation in the Indian Economy

THE FINANCE MINISTER in his budget speech on February 28,198 announced that wholesale price indices had increased by only 3.4 percen between March 1985 and February 1986 as compared to 5.6 percent ove a comparable period the previous year. Even assuming this figure to be ai underestimate the rather unexpectedly low price increase comes in the wak of a whopping Rs. 4400 crore budget deficit according to revised estimates This has encouraged the government to go in for yet another round o deficit financing to the order of Rs. 3800 crores according to budge estimates, a figure that is likely to be higher in actuality.

Even if one accounts for the record consecutive bumper harvests and the apparently improved industrial performance, such low increases in wholesale prices seem at first instance to defy economic logic and past experience in the Indian context. In order to fit the jigsaw puzzle, it will be necessary to look at the role of speculation in the Indian economy.

Traditionally, speculation in the Indian context has essentially implied speculation in commodities. The most apparent form of this speculation manifested itself in the past through the disappearance from shop shelves of the more expensive brands of cigarettes, a few days before the budget and their reappearence at higher prices after the budget. Similarly, petrol pumps would run 'dry' before the budget and would magically be 'restocked' after the budget.

These essentially are rather simple speculative activities designed to take extra profits from the price differentials between the pre-budget and the post-budget prices. A more generalised form of speculation in the Indian economy has been in essential commodities like foodgrains, pulses, edible oils, sugar, kerosene etc. which are items of everyday mass consumption and which, therefore, face an inelastic demand. Taking the case of foodgrains, the wholesale purchases would be made in the post-harvest period when prices are at the lowest and would gradually be released in the market when the prices are higher.

The recent increases in foodgrains output have acted as a depressor for speculative activity. This is because speculation becomes highly profitable in a situation of scarcity, relative to demand. Nullifying this depressor to a certain extent is the constant upward revision of procure-

ment prices for agricultural products by the government. While these act as only a floor price the actual market prices are even higher. Thus, if stocks are held over a year, in addition to the normal trade margin, extra profits could be gleaned by the simple fact that the floor price itself has gone upwards. Speculation in agricultural commodities, though profitable, need not yield the rate of return which speculative capital is on the look-out for, i.e., a rate of return substantially above the rate of interest in the money market. This is also due to the unpredictable direction of government policy. Take the case of the recent spurt in sugar and edible oil prices. The price rise was so rapid and accelerating that, under severe pressure, the government, instead of trying to unearth hoarded stocks and release them in the market, decided to import the same and flood the market. This resulted in prices crashing and not only did the speculators lose money but so also did the primary producers. Hence, speculative capital has been for some time, on the look-out for more lucrative areas. This brings us to the question of the stock market.

The history of the stock market is one of swings with long periods of depressed conditions In the 1950s, there was some activity, but by the early 1960s, this activity was tapering off and remained in that condition for more than a decade. In the early 1980s, there was some revival of stock market activity but not to such an extent as to be termed impressive. In 1981-82, there was a 400 per cent jump in the stock absorption for new issues (see table I) while the number of companies entering the stock market to raise capital doubled. This pace has been maintained with minor swings. The feverish pace had reached a peak in 1985-86 with share prices reaching an all-time high, more so in some selected scrips. In addition, debenture issues, both convertible and non-convertible, were offered to the public at all-time high interest rates. Unconfirmed estimates place the total stock absorption at over Rs. 2000 crores. Compare this with an average of Rs. 117 crores between 1971 and 1976.

The reason for this sudden increase in stock market activity is obvious. Ever since the Congress-I government came back to power, there has been a gradual process of providing greater incentives and subsidies for the corporate sector in order to help it grow. This was quite in line with the government's overall policy of import liberalisation, the pursuit of a luxury consumption-led growth strategy, and so on. All these measures led to expectations of larger profits and faster capital appreciation in the corporate sector. The high-point came with the Rajiv Gandhi government's budget of 1985-86 and the pre-budget policy formulations. The private corporate sector became the beneficiary of hitherto undreamt-of concessions and liberalisation. This brought forth even higher expectations, not only for the immediate period but for the longer period also, of further incentives and concessions. The bulls in the stock market never had it so good.

Speculative capital, thus, moved *en masse* into the stock market. Not

only were new issues grabbed into, even existing stocks of "blue-chip' companies recorded unprecedented advances. Table II gives an indicatior of the degree of increases in share value of selected scrips. The share pric index (*Financial Express Equity Index*), taking 1979=100 as the base, hac reached 300 points by 1985-end. This indicates an average return of nearl 60 per cent per annum in the past five years, an astronomical figure if jus the last year was considered, even if we choose to ignore the dividends ii the interim period

While it is true that the corporate sector has been presented a mucl larger chunk of the cake from the 1985-86 budget than ever before, ye some of the share price increases are not commensurate with the actua potential growth of the company in question. Stock exchange circles woulc admit that the large unexpected price increases are quite unhealthy, for i reveals excessive speculative conditions in the stocks concerned. Further most new issues in the market have been oversubscribed, on an average ove three times the amount offered. All these amount to diversion of specula tive funds from commodities to shares. The reason for this unprecedentec activity is that while the government has formulated policies which have fuelled profit expectations, exaggerated price increases have been stimulatec by speculative activity. The difference between the relatively undevelopec capital market in India and those of the west is that, in the latter case share prices correspond quite closely with the performance of the company while in the former, the price movements are marginally affected by the actual performance of the corporate sector in general and the company ii particular. In India, speculation feeds upon speculation and expectation of further increases or decreases in share prices spur on speculative acti vity. This comparison becomes apparent when the rapidity of price change between the two are compared.

The 'quick-buckers' and the 'equity quacks' have flooded the capita market. A large number of middle class investors are also in the stock market for profit-taking. If they are to remain there and not move theii speculative capital elsewhere, it is necessary for the government to conti- nually offer further incentives and concessions to the corporate sector. This it obviously cannot do, given the resources constraint impinging on the government and the consequent fiscal crisis. Another reason why the stock market "boom" cannot persist is that the middle classes who are now investing in a major way in the stock market, are likely to withdraw hastily from the market once an initial panic sets in the stock market. This has happened in the immediate post-budget period in 1986-87 when prices of hard-selling scrips crashed. This is because, traditionally these classes of investors have been risk-shy. They are, therefore, likely to opt for the attractive and safe bond issues of government undertakings like NTPC, ITI, REC, etc., and other similar forthcoming issues. It is quite likely that the government would go in for this form of financing its capi-

TABLE I

PATTERN OF ABSORPTION OF PRIVATE CAPITAL Issues (in Rs. lakhs)

	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83
No. of Companies	83	69	80	80	96	121	244	353
Amount Issued (1+2)	6408	3430	7171	5787	6224	9838	42163	35660
1. Subscribed	769	575	1456	1137	1389	2427	11965	15122
1) Promoters etc.	579	440	1032	941	1068	2211	10339	14211
2) Govt., Fin. Inst, LIC etc.	190	135	424	196	321	216	7626	911
2. Offered to Public	5639	2855	5715	4650	4836	7410	30198	20538
(i) Subscribed by Pub. other than under-writers	2856	1549	3077	3477	3989	6559	26093	15653
(ii) Underwriters	2783	1265	2499	1170	835	833	4104	4418
(iii) Unsubscribed	—	42	139	4	11	19	1	467
3. Amount underwritten	5475	2520	5290	3358	3761	4212	26138	16270

Source : Reserve Bank of India. Monthly Bulletins, Various issues.

TABLE II

Movement of share prices (Selected Companies)

		(i) Pre-Budget 1985	(ii) Pre-Budget 1986	[(ii)÷(i)] × 100
1.	Blow Plast	36.50	120.00	328.8
2.	Blue Star	33.00	90.00	272.7
3.	Dunlop India	22.30	68.00	304.9
4.	Food Specialities	86.00	252.50	293.6
5.	GSFC	537.00	1505.00	280.3
6.	Hindustan Lever	51.25	146.00	284.9
7.	Hindustan Motors	37.50	129.50	345.3
8.	Indrol	90.50	375.00	414.4
9.	Lakme	74.00	187.50	253.4
10.	Larsen & Toubro	72.00	190.00	263.9
11.	NOCIL	240.00	622.50	288.5
12.	Reliance Industries	120 00	326.00	271.7
13.	SPIC	43.50	161.00	370.1
14.	Tata Steel	381.00	1360.00	357.0
15.	Zenith Steel	28.03	79.00	282.1

Source . Various issues of *Financial Express*, Bombay. Already existing companies.

tal expenditure in the future also in the light of the recommendations of the *Sukhamoy Chakravarti Committee to Review the Working of the Monetary System*. Thus, the withdrawal of a substantial amount of funds from the stock market will depress the optimism in those markets. Therefore, with a reasonable degree of certainty, we can assume that speculative captial will be re-channelised, once the scope for super profits in stock speculation diminishes, into traditional spheres, i.e. essential commodities. Once that happens, the government can no longer be smug about low rates of whole-sale price increases or price stability in general.

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Ruling Party's Defence of Muslim Women's Bill

THE TAME petering out of the campaign against the Muslim (Divorced) Women's Maintenance Bill 1986 is best seen in the absence of critical response to the Congress party's submissions during the debate in the parliament. Barring Seema Mustafa who wrote in the *Telegraph* on the presentation of K. C. Pant, Union Minister for Steel and Mines, none of the newspaper editors or other commentators thought it fit to examine and scrutinise the nature of the submissions of the Congress party. And yet a critique of the ruling party's defence of and reasoning behind the Bill is necessary, not only because the Bill would have a debilitating effect on the Muslim community but also because it is a less disadvantageous way to ensure a commual chasm which can enable the legitimisation of the pandering of the articulate sections of the Hindu community. The debate in parliament therefore, sheds light on the ruling party's attitude and approach, and helps identify the evolving contours of the ruling party's political ideology.

When the Bill was presented before the Lok Sabha on February 27 the Prime Minister defended it on the ground that Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code was "not giving adequate protection to women", and that the then proposed Bill gave the Muslim women much more than was available under sections 125 and 127 of Cr. P C. He contended that the Supreme Court judgement had posed "certain" uncertainties in the mind of "certain" Muslims. He added that it was not for the government to examine whether these were "concrete" or not, as it was enough to know that "minorities were *afraid* that their rights were being diluted". By the time it was debated in the parliament, in May last, the emphasis had shifted almost exclusively to stressing that the Bill was brought in deference to the wishes of the Muslim community. The Union Minister for Law, A.K. Sen, in his intervention in the debate on May 5 stated that 'the accusation is that the Government is surrendering to communalism and fundamentalism" and wondered : is it surrendering to fundamentalism or communalism, if every time we listen to the just demands of the minority if you heed to their sensitiveness about the protection of their personal laws" ? When a member of parliament reminded the Minister that "their (minority community's) legitimate demand is education, health"......he was

neither allowed to complete his sentence nor was there any response to his intervention. The reason was simple. Behind the pretence of being sensitive the ruling party was camouflaging its policy of in fact disabling the minorities. In an case the deprivation of the Muslim community is all too clear to need elucidation.

There were several other occasions when the claim of ruling party members of being sensitive to minorities was challenged. During the course of his excruciatingly long submission the Law Minister stressed that it is "relevant for me to point out that no government worth its salt can remain deaf to the demands of the minority community". When MPs asked "What happened in Barabanki ?" or "What happened in Moradabad ?" they were reprimanded by the Speaker. Not surprisingly, since the Law Minister would have been at a loss to explain these away. During the debate in the Rajya Sabha the same Minister contended that "Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru repeatedly said that the personal laws of the Muslims would be changed only with their consent. And if the Muslims want it tomorrow, they will have it tomorrow". When a member asked, "Have you taken the opinion of all the Muslim people ?" before proposing the Bill, she was curtly ignored. When the same member asked "If one section of the Hindu community wants revival of 'sati', will the Minister consider that also ?", the Minister, with insidious humour, responded : "Sir, it reminds me of that fable in Sanskrit ; one king said, 'I shall give away my daughter to anyone who can defeat me in debate', The wife of the king was very much grieved and she asked 'What have you done ? Are you going to barter away your daughter ? If tomorrow anybody defeats you in debate will he take away our daughter ?' He said 'My dear wife, why are you getting worried ? *It is for me to judge whether I have been defeated or not"* (sic !). The implication was different from what was intended. It meant, as the Prime Minister had earlier opined, that it is for the government to decide what is or is not the majority opinion in each case. And presumably what "concession" is to be made and when, is the exclusive prerogative too of the government.

Had the reasoning in favour of the Bill ended on this note their submissions could have been less significant. However, the contrary was the case. And the ruling party's intervention turned ominous. The Union Minister of Commerce, Shiv Shankar, one of the four ministers who presented the ruling party's submissions to the parliament, in his speech to the Rajya Sabha on May 8, introduced the line of argument that was perfected by K.C. Pant. Shiv Shankar argued that "these are the matters where you cannot judge these issues on the anvil of total logic and reasons. These are matters of faith and that is why one has to keep the background of the shariat law, the Muslim law for the purpose of a proper understanding of the whole issue." In times better than ours such statements would have been considered unexceptionable. Such not being the case what was implied was that the Muslims could not be expected to look dispassionately on

such issues, and the reason for bringing forward such a Bill was therefore to pacify an agitated community. He implicitly characterised the Muslim community as being unreasonable and drew attention to the contrast between the two communities by saying : "I gave the example of various personal laws with reference to the Hindu Code Bill. . . that at that time the Hindu community was prepared to accept that law. . . Whatever we might say here, outside the situation is that (Muslim) people are not prepared to accept this".

Reference to "law" here being a euphemism for reform, the Minister's remarks are a not-so-subtle reminder that compared to the Hindu community which had "willingly" accepted reform, the Muslim community remains caught in the web of illogical and unreasonable faith. When a member challenged, "Has there been a consensus of the Muslim community on this Bill ?" there was expectedly no response. The Prime Minister in any case had made it clear that it was not necessary to establish whether there is a consensus, and the Law Minister had amplified this line of thinking through his fable.

But compared to the rest the most parochial submission from the government side was made by K. C. Pant in the Lok Sabha that surpassed others for its ill-disguised pursuit of a line of thinking based on the theme of superiority of Hindus which implicitly describes Muslims as a backward-looking community. K.C. Pant argued, "We cannot depend only on the law for reforms. The society has to be ready for reform. The well-springs of that reform have to come from within and then the law and the sentiments that have been aroused by a certain movement, they coincide and then the society moves forward." The real meaning of this statement becomes clear when juxtaposed with something K.C. Pant said later in his speech. "And if today debate is taking place within the Muslim community about this Bill, about its desirability, about its contents, about the need for the Muslim community *to do some rethinking*, I would consider it a very healthy sign." And so that there would be no mistake he added, "In the Hindu society *this process has been going on for decades*. It had begun a a hundred years ago. As a result of that and the efforts of so many tall leaders of this country *the Hindu society has been able to regenerate itself*." The suggestion is so clear that it hardly needs any elaboration. Unlike the Hindus who have reformed themselves as a result of a reform movement begun a hundred years ago, the Muslims remain where they were. Apart from the fact that the Hindu Code Bill discriminates against women on inheritance, over the years many of its other provisions have been diluted. While a recent judgement of the Supreme Court compels a woman to cohabit with her husband or face automatic divorce by an amendment in 1976 to the Special Marriage Act, Hindus marrying under this Act will not be governed by the Indian Succession Act but by the Hindu Succession Act !

But reason cannot penetrate the fog of obscurantism. And through

an inexplicable permutation of logic we are first told that the Bill is good for Muslim women. And of course the Muslim community wants it. This the government knows but how they arrived at such a conclusion is a not for the public to know. And therefore government instead of giving the process of reform a push chooses to put a brake on it. All in the name of secularism. Why ? Claims of superiority of the Hindu community based on the Hindu Code Bill of 1956, whether on the matter of marriage or divorce or inheritance are of course highly debatable. But why make blatantly false, historically inaccurate, and sectarian statements ? Was this a feeler to the articulate section of the Hindu community ? A suggestion too that the Bill was in the best interest of the Hindu community ? Is it therefore that K.C. Pant made the following remark : "Is it worth the game just for the sake of pressing a political point of view, to risk arousing passions in this country at a time when we need the unity and solidarity of every community in this country ?" Does this not mean that were it not for such a Bill the prospects of getting the support of the Muslims for defending the unity and integrity of the country would be jeopardised ! In other words the Muslim community's commitment to the country is incumbent on the concessions made to them at this sensitive juncture in the country's history. And any opposition to such concessions meant that the opponents were playing with fire and provoking the Muslim community.

What image, what impression do all these arguments leave behind ? What excites passions, and revives distorted atavistic memories ? Is it not the image of a recalcitrant minority bent on keeping itself different, aggressively demanding concessions even when it is being pampered, eroding from within the process of consolidation of a Pan-Indian identity ? I would argue that this is not far fetched if placed in a broader perspective : the need to fill the ideological vacuum for the ruling party ; the party's efforts under Indira Gandhi to make symbolic and substantial gestures towards articulate sections of Hindus ; the need to cover selling of the country to the imperialists through the hyperbole of reviving religio-cultural heritage ; the not so subtle feelers to leaders of fanatic Hindu militant groups, the latest being a meeting on July 16 called by the Prime Minister with leaders of "Dharma Raksha Samiti" including Jagatguru Sankaracharya of Dwaraka-pith, working president of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, general secretary of Sanatana Dharma Pradinidhi Sabha the etc. (This meeting was the lead news for full three minutes on the 8.40 p.m. TV news). Surely these are not isolated, sporadic or incidental.

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C.R. Das, Gandhi and the Working Class

RAKHAHARI CHATTERJI, Working Class and the Nationalist Movement in India, The Critical Years, South Asian Publishers, New Delhi 1984, 215 pp., Rs. 80.00.

A NEW PHASE in the Indian nationalist movement started after : first world war when, for a number of reasons, the masses were turned for either tactical or strategic support. The integration of mass polit into the new approach of the INC, which till then, except for the 1ȿ eruption, had been dominated by the petitional activities of the urb professionals and the big business class, was not devoid of danger. entailed the risk of the downtrodden people transgressing the ratl limited aims of the Congress leadership.

As a matter of fact, the British government and its colonial admir tration were seriously perturbed by such a prospect. The real or fictitic activities of foreign-inspired revolutionaries, who were supposed to atterr to integrate the working class in the nationalist movement, were the foc of attention of the intelligence services and were the subject of a numl of conspiracy cases.

The apprehension was not unwarranted, although most of those t intelligence services described as communists were not. Till the m twenties, there were practically no communists in India, despite t relatively early start of industrialization. One therefore has a ba: reservation on the sub-title of Rakhahari Chatterji's book in which defines the early 1920s as the critical years in which the future IN attitude towards the working class is supposed to have been formed.

The period, significant though it was, did in this respect probat not have a decisive and conclusive character. The author has started fro the assumption that the two opposite and exclusive views on nationalis and the working class were represented by Chittaranjan Das and Mahatn Gandhi. Since the former passed away in the mid-twenties, the ensuii period up to independence is discarded in the course of a few pages.

The contention is that the national leadership only towards the fi end of the independence movement, through the then founded INTU(attempted to bridge the hiatus between the INC and the working clas The rejection of the approach of C. R. Das in the early twenties in favoı of the Gandhian policy of indifference, is seen as the start of a gener

development whereby political power ultimately moved into the hands of the brown sahibs (echoing the famous statement of Chittaranjan Das).

One could question the location of the critical years in the early twenties with references to the at least as critical years at the time of the civil disobedience movement, the formation of the state governments and the Quit India movement. In the later periods, a by far more vociferous clash of opinions took place in the INC Moreover, the working class had emerged as an independent force led either by INC loyalists, although not by the party, or by the various shades of communists and socialists.

One in fact could argue that both in respect of the agrarian issue and in respect of the capital-labour relations, the confrontation between the nationalism of the oppressed classes and the elite based nationalism was a continuous phenomenon and that the INC, instead of clearing the field, established and generally maintained its hegemonic position over the working classes. Chatterji thinks otherwise : "The INC remained an onlooker to all this" (p. 178).

Nationalist politics in an era of mass mobilization, as in the early twenties, throws up two basic features. In the first place, the understanding emerged that any movement against the colonial political domination, in order to possess an effective bargaining power, should automatically involve workers and peasants. In the second place, it simultaneously emerged that with the potential growth of industrial working class consciousness and organization, the all-in unity of a bourgeois-dominated mass movement would come under severe strain.

As most authors of a by now considerable number of books on the history of the trade union movement, Chatterji also opens with a survey of the growth of the working class, the early labour movement and the legislative process. The treatment, on the basis of secondary literature and reports, benefits from an attractive style and from a logical structuring, but in length is unbalanced with the latter one third of the book which deals with the actual subject matter of nationalism and the working class.

Although most of the material is interesting, it is not really germane to the question under discussion. When it is, for example the chapter on the character of the working class, no conclusions are inferred which may be useful in properly assessing the respective roles of Das and Gandhi.

In the debate on the class character of industrial labour, two opposite positions have been occupied. On the one hand, taking the lead from Whitley's Royal Commission on Labour in 1929, range the scholars who focus on the village connection resulting in a peasant-cum-worker attitude. Others have stressed the urban anchorage, but at the same time have argued that the emerging working class was in fact to an extent still embedded in traditional hierarchical structures. The worker was often an indentured free labourer, a term coined by Lalita Chakravarty.

Chatterji disagrees with both approaches. He sees in the early

working class the combination of three different rural strata, namely footloose rural proletariat, ruined craftsmen and low castes. In his view, they moved freely to the industrial centres in search of new economic opportunities. In the cities, "the workers found a hitherto unknown freedom from caste disabilities rampant in the narrow confines of village life" (p. 33).

In the villages, they left behind only "a hut and a hearth", which retained a usefulness only in view of the severe lack of accommodation in the mill areas. From the free flow or rural push-outs, who not only shook off their material links but their immaterial links as well, was born a working class which is supposed to have smoothly acquired an urban industrial identity. The possibility of the perseverance of semi-feudal methods of recruitment and working arrangements is ignored. The role of labour lords who went looking for cheap, docile, dependent and ethnically diffuse male workers in specific catchment areas, is passed by with the argument that distant sourcing in itself does not stand the test of scrutiny.

The picture which Chatterji draws has serious flaws, empirically and theoretically. It obliterates the ambivalent position of the industrial workers as a class. A number of factors hampered the articulation of a clear class character. Vertical systems of patronage on the basis of economic as well as primordial attachments could bring the lowest and least organised workers ultimately under the political hegemony of the top national leaders. It is at this point that the relevance of such nationalist leaders as Gandhi and Das emerges. Professional politicians from within the aristocratic milieus could, on the basis of an existing religio-cultural mainstream idiom. appeal to the various economic strata in their ideological hinterland The religious obstinacy of the Mahatma was matched by the Vaishnavite orientation of the friend of labour, Chittaranjan : "When labour would range themselves against capital, the whole fabric of civilisation would collapse. Indian culture was one of synthesis which would include all sections and communities" (quote on p. 144). In this respect both leaders really belong to the traditional society. Das in fact was much closer to Gandhi than to the communists, as Chatterji contends.

Gandhi, as well as Das, is pigeon-holed as a radical militant labour politician who, unlike Das, had a "non-political" approach in the sense that he did not want to involve the workers in political movements. Whereas Gandhi, as requested by the Indian millowners at Ahmedabad and tacitly approved by the government, gave his blessings to the formation of an integrative trade union within the confines of one city, and refused to extend this type of organisation to other places, Das was busy amassing (vice-) presidentships of various unions. The supposed aim was to galvanise their strength for the national cause. Possibly this was also done for the cause of Das himself.

Chatterji would not entertain such a possibility of assessing his subject as an opportunist politician. As it stands, however, Das appears to have changed his ideas on the role of labour thrice in a rather short period of four years. In the middle of that period, at the INC Gaya Congress in 1922, he made his famous speech on swaraj for the masses. The address was as much directed against the rule of the middle class bureaucracy (which was not actually defined in terms of any ownership class), as against class struggle. His programme of mass mobilisation was propagated with the clear warning that if Congress would not organise he workers and peasants, they would get attracted by new organisations, lissociated from the cause of swaraj, which would bring the class struggle vithin the arena of the peaceful revolution.

Gandhi and Das in this respect had much more in common than 'hatterji is prepared to accept. Would it not have been better to analyze ie two leaders as the two sides of the coin in the INC dilemma of nationa-st politics in the new era of emancipatory movements from below? The idical difference was that Gandhi realised that the organisation of workers s a militant guard in the nationalist movement, would set in motion ncontrollable processes which in the end might undermine and destroy the risting patterns of culture and industry. Also concerning the latter aspect, iandhi and Das thought in unison. The wresting of power from selfish iterests obviously did not include the industrial bourgeoisie, which :tually had to be defended by the workers.

On this point, Chatterji is quite confused. The shifts in position are itionalised as a sign of the fact that Das was "a nation-builder, and his ew of the Indian nation was that it had to be multi-class, multi-group id multi-interest nation" (p. 163). As long as he was in the INC, he was i leftist-nationalist", who strengthened the left wing "just to maintain ilance within Congress" (p. 176), and who envisaged an independent India n which the organised labour and the peasantry share power equally with e middle classes" (p. 142).

The formation of the Swaraj Party by Das and Motilal Nehru in 1924 ves a clue, however, of where the real interests of Chittaranjan Das ould be located. In the light of his class position and his cultural make-), an interesting and detailed study could have been made on the manner iich the nationalist politicians from the aristocratic circles tried to come terms with the role and position of the working class in the nationalist ovement in Eastern India. That study still remains to be done.

G.K. LIETEN

Editorial Note

THE CURRENT number of *Social Scientist* is devoted to a discussion of Edward Said's work *Orientalism* and of themes thrown up by it. Many readers may ask : why devote a whole issue of the journal to a topic which is both esoteric, as well as, for most of us, fairly opaque ? Our answer is that Said's work has a wider relevance than merely for the narrow circle of scholars interested in the theme of orientalism *per se* ; not surprisingly, it has already generated a considerable amount of debate in several circles. Since we believe that one of our major tasks is to bring to our renders a whiff of contemporary debates on influential pieces of writing, devoting a whole issue of the journal to the debate around Said's book seems eminently worthwhile.

The importance of Said's work is at two distinct levels. At one level it touches on crucial aspects of the relationship between imperialism and culture. It is a reinterpretation of the epistemological projections of nineteenth century Orientalist texts, in the course of which Said both unravels the systematic production of a "discourse" identified as Orientalism, and shows its links with the process of European imperialist subjugation of other societies. At another level, Said raises questions both wider and more general. His perception of "texts" as springing from a will-to-power, his emphasis that "discourse" is produced, that it is "at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures", his assertion that fields and disciplines emerge not as a "natural" phenomenon but as a result of selections, prohibitions and sanctions, his view of the interdependence between power and knowledge, and his endorsement of the "adversary" role of the intellectual "within his discipline and its institutional supports", are all indicative obviously of a general epistemological stance which is important in its own right and deserves serious attention.

The lead article by Rashmi Bhatnagar discusses the relationship between Said and Foucault. While Said's debt to Foucault is significant, is admitted by Said himself, and is most evident in his use of "Foucauldian" concepts like "discourse", it is the points of difference between the two which deserve particular notice. The contrast between Foucault's anti-humanism which goes with his exclusively theoretical activism, and Said's self-styled humanism and opting for an "interventionist critical practice" derives according to the paper from their respective historical positions.

Said, as a critic of colonialism, maintains *for himself a "perceptual di tance" from official discources as well as from "family-quarrels of tl* Western philosophical tradition".

Sibet Bozdogan also notes this essential difference between Said an Foucault and underscores the point that the strength of Said's "adversar position" comes from his not counterposing a defensive, oppositiona discourse against the Orientalist one : Said does *not* advance an authenti traditional Orient in opposition to the sterotype of the Orient produced i the Orientalist discourse. The author takes this as the point of departur for criticising some recent views on Islamic culture and architecture.

Rajeswari Sunder Rajan's paper cuts through the Orientalist-Anglicis controversy to lay bare the commonness of their assumptions and intent Both Orientalists and Anglicists, she argues, were concerned with adminis trative efficiency and involved in the imperial project. Their difference centred around methods rather than goals ; the Orientalists' concern fo Indian languages for instance derived not from any desire to perpetuate o promote these languages as such, but from a desire to use them for a better imparting of English "ideas". Both Orientalists and Anglicists wer like-wise united in their contempt for the India they saw ; the Orientalists however invoked a glorious past culture as a counterpoint to this con tempt, while the Anglicists indulged in wholesale denigration. The intro duction of English literature as a discipline for study into school anc college curricula was part of an overall imperial project ; in this overal project the Orientalists and Anglicists were collaborators. The author ther raises the pertinent question : can the study of this discipline even today be seen as an "Orientalising enterprise" ?

The paper by Kalpana Sahni, provides an interesting complement to the other papers. While analysing the process by which Dostoevsky moved in the course of time towards an arch-nationalist and even imperia-list position, and contrasting his attitude with that of Tolstoy, the paper shows that the Oriental Phantom was not domiciled in Western Europe alone, but haunted Russia as well.

What we have got together in this number is only a small offering ; the complex question of Said's relationship with Marxism for instance is not covered anywhere. But we hope that the readers will find it useful, at least for acquainting them with a range of ideas.

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Uses and Limits of Foucault : A Study of the Theme of Origins in Edward Said's 'Orientalism'

THE PUBLICATION of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978 and its subsequent reception and influence is a phenomenon of considerable significance to those of us who are vitally engaged by the possibilities of a Third-World intervention in the field of theory. That Said's book emerges from a widespread debate is indicated by the common assumptions shared by others writing at the same time like Bryan S. Turner, *Marxism and the End of Orientalism* (1978), Anwar Abdel Malek, *Orientalism in Crisis* (1963) and J.P.S. Oberoi, *Science and Swaraj* (1978).[1] The last few years have seen the formation of a loosely-affiliated group (Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak, Homi Bhabha and Edward Said among others) who have variously been extending the critique of colonialism and post-colonialism.

The critique arises from the intermingling of the concerns of the disciplines of history (particularly the school of subaltern-studies), sociology, Freudian psychoanalysis and literary criticism under the umbrella of what is now increasingly becoming known as Theories of Subject-Production. There is a new climate of speculation about the ways in which the colonized subject was and continues to be produced by cultural practices/historical documents, archives and literary texts. The complex processes by which the colonized people are awarded a self-image, their culture explained to them, the ways in which they are newly named and interpreted to themselves—this would seem to be what is meant by the (re)production of the colonized subject. The colonial subject has become central to theories of subject-production both for the continuing political value of colonial struggles, as also because colonialism marks, in Fanon's phrase, violence in its natural state.[2]

These speculations and investigations in what is becoming discernible as a field-in-the-making in Third World theory are to some extent influenced by Said's *Orientalism* even where they may take the form of a reaction against the absences discovered in the book. There is however one remarkable area of consensus between Said and other theorists in that they all adopt the methods of post-structuralism, although there may be differences in ideological positions, areas of address and even mutations in textual

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practices. The questions Said and his fellow-theorists deserve to be asked, concern the relationship, even the fit, between their thesis and their method. In the case of Orientalism, Said clearly states in his Introduction that his method derives from Gramsci, Vico, Kuhn and predominantly from the writings of Foucault. In a hostile reading, Said's application of Foucault's theories may seem imitative. Readers may well ask : is Said's indictment of Orientalist texts for their Eurocentrism merely a duplication of the Foucauldian project —which is to make Western man rigorously self-conscious about the furthest limits of his discourse ? Is it possible for Said to utilize the post-structuralist method without surrendering to its ideology ? In effect, is Said's method at odds with his thesis ? The purpose of this paper is to examine the implications of this question by isolating the specific character of Foucault's influence on Said's *Orientalism.*

The Theme of Origins

The nature of influence inheres in and circulates around the theme of origins. In an earlier book titled *Beginnings* (1975) one notices, from hindsight, Said's preoccupation with the problem of origins. The notion of an originary moment in the history of an individual, race or civilization where an idea or a set of ideas or a particular mode of perceiving reality may be said to have emerged is recognized by post-structuralist thinkers like Foucault to be a highly problematic notion, for it leads to nostalgia and all its attendant falsifications. Foucault's unfolding of the theme of origins needs quoting in order that we might appreciate its particular quality which Said has elsewhere described as "a poetics of thought"[3]

> Why does Nietzsche challenge the pursuit of the origin (*Ursprung*), at least on those occasions when he is truly a genealogist ? First, because it is an attempt to capture the exact essence of things, their purest possibilities, and their carefully protected identities, because this search assumes the existence of immobile forms that precede the external world of accident and succession. This search is directed to 'that which was already there,' the image of a primordial truth fully adequate to its nature ; it necessitates the removal of every mask to ultimately disclose an original identity. However if the genealogist refuses to extend his faith in metaphysics, if he listens to history, he finds that there is 'something altogether different' behind things : not a timeless and essential secret, but the secret that they have no essence or that their essences were fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms. . . . What is found at the historical beginning of things is not the inviolable identity of their origin ; it is the dissension of other things. It is disparity.
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> History also teaches how to laugh at the solemnities of the origin. . . . The origin always precedes the Fall . . . it is associated

> with the gods, and its story is always sung as a theogony. But historical beginnings are lowly: not in the sense of modest or discret like the steps of a dove, but derisive and ironic, capable of undoing every infatuation.[4]

Foucault's point is that the search for origins is essentialist and militates against a proper sense of historicity. For the colonized people, such a search for their origins is doubly foreclosed, 'derisive and ironic,' because the process of colonization meant precisely the wiping out of their history, traditions and language. As an instance of this foreclosure, Said glances at the Middle East as the locus for their biblical origins: 'All pilgrimages to the Orient passed through, or had to pass through, the Biblical lands; most of them in fact were attempts either to relive or to liberate from the large, incredibly fecund Orient some portion of Judaeo-Christian/Greco-Roman actuality.'[5] The consequence of these investments, as Said has repeatedly emphasized in his writings, is the denial of human rights, legal right of residence, the status of nationhood and the historical identity accruing to the Palestinian people.[6] The Palestinian problem is a dramatic case of the ways in which the colonizing impulse veils its real economic, political and ideological origins by the simple expedient of calling every Palestinian a terrorist.

Fanon had recognized that in the triangular dialogue between the settler, the native and the native intellectual there is 'a permanent confrontation on the phantasmic plane.'[7] In this realm versions of origins are offered and resisted in a continuing dialectic; thus Fanon likens the self-justifying ideological operation of colonialism to the mother 'who unceasingly restrains her fundamentally perverse offspring from managing to commit suicide and from giving free rein to its evil instincts. The colonial mother protects her child from itself, from its ego, and from its physiology, its biology and its own unhappiness which is its very essence.'[8]

In this Oedipal tyranny the search for identity by the colonized people continually returns to the terms of opposition set by the colonial mother. In effect the search for Aryan/Islamic/Semite origins becomes for the colonized people a longing for an impossible purity and a yearning for the fullness of meaning that is not only uncritical but also politically suspect in that it can unwittingly serve the reactionary forces of revivalism. Nowhere is this danger greater than in the Indian context, where the search for the source of Hindu identity in the Vedic times has almost invariably led to a loss of commitment to our contemporary plural/secular identity.

In *Beginnings* Said is therefore engaged in the project of decolonization by divesting himself of the illusion of origins, a project which involves an extensive play with its theoretical possibilities:

> Those traditional conceptions of primacy such as source and origin, the principles of continuity and development, and those metaphors for originating authority such as author, discipline, and the will to

truth are all more or less cancelled by Foucault.[9]

In Said's reading of Foucault the correlatives of the Western search for origins are several clusters of ideas which need some unpacking here. Origins, authority, author, the Law of the Father—by its own inner logic the quest for the originary moment (in history, in collective consciousness) moves insistently towards fixing a document which is made canonical because it inaugurates the origin. The discovery of the origin is made authoritative by scholarship, sealed off by commentaries which argue and debate but continue to affirm the authority of the initial discovery. Thus authority and all its connotations of authoritativeness, the chief of which is the tyranny of the author, is confirmed (see Foucault's 'What Is an Author ?'). Origins are also implicated in narrative and representation, in the novelistic model of successive continuity which gives formal reassurance of a beginning, middle and end. This chain of begetting and fatherhood, mixing memory and desire, constitutes a patrimony which, in relation to the ideological operation of patriarchy, becomes a celebration of the Law of the Father, disguised so successfully as to be invisible.

These then would seem to be the ideological correlatives of the Western sign, the interlocking series by which Western man fabricates his 'self' into a coherent identity, positing himself as beginning and end of all Knowledge and grandly naming it Humanism. As Foucault formulates it : 'Continuous history is the indispensable correlative of the founding function of the subject.'[10] This Foucauldian position against the dominant humanist tradition has still to be evaluated in the perspective of our times but what can be said at once without fear of contradiction is that it becomes peculiarly liberating for Said. He is freed from the endless speculations about a lost, pure, pre-colonial origin and from the necessity of posing a real Orient against the set of fictions in the Orientalist texts. Thus Said makes abundantly clear in his Introduction that his purpose is not to recover a reality behind the European distortions and mis-representations, but instead to focus steadily on the production of the Orient as a textual construct. To quote Said : 'It is clear, I hope, that my concern with authority does not entail analyses of what lies hidden in the Orientalist text, but analysis rather of the text's surface, its exteriority to what it describes' (p. 20).

In repudiating 'what lies hidden in the Orientalist text' Said is working towards a dismantling of the entire machinery of origins, inasmuch as his machinery dictates a specific way of apprehending reality in terms of depths and surfaces. Within this cognitive metaphor which clothes all our thinking, the past is perceived as a surface, and analysis assumes the unconscious arrogance of discovering its depth or inner meaning.

Some of these influential theoretical positions regarding origins have thus provided Said with a point of entry into the ongoing critique of colonialism and post-colonialism. The Third-World intellectual must grasp

roduced in it. It remains to be seen what Said's claim of liberation leads o—does it remain an imitation of Foucauldian selfconsciousness while apped within the constituting paradoxes of the Western philosophical adition ? Furthermore, if all roads lead to false origins, where does iquiry begin without being implicated in false origins ? These are some f the questions and the area of address of the next section.

'he Materiality of the Text

iid's provisional beginning or point of incision in *Orientalism* is not so uch a re-inscription of the motivations of European mercantile capitalism, the emergence of a new 'field' of knowledge known as Orientalist studies. ie concept of a field is the fundamental organizing principle in Foucault's vritings, and at the simplest level of resonance Foucault intends a 'field' o mean the formal conditions which make the appearance of meaning ossible. Right away one can discern the gains of locating knowledge in he field of its historical practice, in that which grants it an official voice, ind the political context of power relations in which this voice situates tself.

The notion of a field is primarily a notion of space, and Foucault's lominant concern is with the element of space in which language and hought occur. His studies have consistently been addressed to their formaion as discursive fields, in Gayatri Spivak's phrase as 'power-in-space.'[11] n conceiving Orientalist studies as a field or a power-in-space Said has eized a peculiarly effective strategy to make Orientalist studies visible as a nonument in the Foucauldian sense—its symmetry of assumptions, metaphrs, binary oppositions, even its physical solidity and power of interference. 'here is a certain ironic fit in the methodological apparatus of a 'field' as pplied to the narrative of colonization: Said seems to be gesturing towards he imperial aggrandizement of space—both outer geographical space of he colonised country and inner psychic space of the colonized people. 'he notion of a field also tends to create startling relationships of simili-ude and difference between those who are made visible and those who are ivisibilized. By no means is the diachronic framework denied or obscured; i fact the Foucauldian field pays attention to the timeframe internal to a eld.

In the first chapter of *Orientalism* Said disrupts the chronology of arrative by intertwining the public speeches of Lord Balfour, Lord Kromer nd Kissinger in order to familiarize the reader with the range of consensus r one-voicedness that is produced and disseminated by the discursive field f Orientalist studies. In fact the entire first section of the book outlines ie scope and sets the stage for a detailed examination of Anglo-French 'rientalist scholarship in Islamic studies.

Said is by no means undertaking to prescribe a meta-text of colonialism 'hich would contain a model anterior to its historical concreteness. His

commitment is to histories rather than 'a grand, enveloping notion o History,'[12] to the specificity of the severally different colonial histories o the Palestinian, the African, the Indian. The corollary of the search fo origins is the search for *the* historical model of production-relations an the transition from feudalism to capitalism. Foucault suggests a mor modest claim that returns the historian to his role as archivist without th privilege of and claims to a universal truth :

> The historical sense . . . must only be the acuity of a view that dis tinguishes, distributes, disperses, allows free play to deviations an limits—a kind of view that dissociates, is capable of dissociatin itself, and is capable of erasing the unity of that human bein who is supposed to carry the view in a sovereign manner towards hi past.[13]

Said has commented on 'the constitutive ambivalence towards history'[1] evident in Foucault's writings and interviews, an ambivalence that stem from a reaction against the disease in the historiography of the West. Th positive side of this ambivalence is a commitment to a new kind of histor that is directed against identity and based on counter-memory, that paro dies monumental history and opposes the theme of history as reminiscence, recognition. Most significantly, such a view of history must be judged by the histories of the repressed other than it uncovers—the hysteric woman the insane, the criminal and the sexual outlaw : the putting of these histo ries against the mainstream and dominant History of reminiscence and recognition. Finally consider the Foucauldian refusal to generalise these case-studies into a general theory of history. It would be well to remember these Foucauldian strictures before reading into Said's *Orientalism* a theory to fit all colonial experience.

As Said sees it, the antecedents of the opposition between Europe and its exotic other extend back to the Christian picture of Islam during the Middle Ages and Renaissance and even further back to Aeschylus' *The Persians.* However Said's provisional beginning is at the point in European history when the assumptions about identity and otherness are organised, systematised and institutionalised into a discipline with its own methodological apparatus.

Said's method of approaching the field of Arabic studies is to grant it the status of a semi-autonomous production of discourse. Said problematizes this mode of production not by asking the false question of its 'primordial origins' but by making more circumspect inquiries. What are the first emergences of this field, its pre-conceptual level, what is its history of institutionalisation ? What is its characteristic way of approaching its object of study ? Further, what relationship does this field posit between the object of its study and the investigator ? What are its buried cognitive metaphors (resemblances ? depth and surfaces ? correspondences ?).

The economic, political and military appetites of nineteenth century Europe are, according to Said, typified by, rather than attributed to, the

method employed by Napoleon's systematic campaign in Egypt. Said's analysis calls attention to the method by which Napoleon's military acquisition of Egypt was consolidated by the compilation of exhaustive information by a team of scientists, geographers, historians and archaelogists. This close alliance and mutual interdependence between scholarly research on the one hand and military administration and State policy-making on the other, was such that the scholars in Said's words became the 'learned division' of the army.

In Said's reading of the event, Napoleon's campaign is not the first irruption of desire on the body of the colonial text, but it does mark the systematic impulses in what now becomes discernible as the Orientalist project. Said notes features in the project that will recur again and again—Egypt becomes a site of desire in the power-struggle between France and England, a newly-discovered arena for the recovery of national and personal glory. Yet Napoleon's conscious strategy only sought out what was latent in the memories of his adolescence—the 'memories and glories that were attached to Alexander's Orient generally and to Egypt in particular' (p. 80). Thus the discovery of Egypt is only a re-vision, an imaginative engagement with the myth of Alexander, Europe discovering the glorious chapter in its own past and laying the foundations for the psycho-social phenomena of Napoleonism.

What differentiates the originary moment (Alexander's Orient) from the retracing (Napoleon's campaign) are the sources of desire—Napoleon's reading of Marigny's historical account and Comte de Volney's travelogue, the summary he makes of these accounts in his youthful manuscripts and his written reflections on the campaign assessing the difficulties in Egypt's annexation, culminating in the monumental 23 volumes of the *Description de l' Egypte*. Not only is the campaign and its consequences textual, but in fact the sources of Napoleon's desire belong to 'the realm of ideas and myths culled from texts, not empirical reality . . . he saw the Orient only as it had been encoded first by classical texts and then by Orientalist experts, whose vision, based on classical texts, seemed a useful substitute for any actual encounter with the real Orient' (p. 80).

The value of this textual knowledge in its preceding and postdating the military campaign lies in the way it enables the military project to acquire currency in cultural practices. Napoleon's preparations involve appeals to the people in Arabic protesting his benevolence. This benevolence took the forms of wooing the local imams into interpreting the Koran in favour of his invasion because "Napoleon tried everywhere to prove that he was fighting for Islam" (p. 82). What Victor Hugo perceived as Napoleon's tact consisted of a veneration for the language, the commissioning of translations and a whole technique that Said describes as the 'use of the scholars to manage his contacts with the natives' (p. 82). The close interdependence between power and knowledge gave impetus to

the *scientific project* in Renan's works and the *geopolitical project* in Lessep's Suez Canal.

The analogues between the power/knowledge formation in Napoleon's campaign and the power-in-knowledge of the Orientalists in India bear contemplation. The scholarship of men like William Jones and the civilizing mission of the Orientalists consisted of the discovery of manuscripts, translations, the interpretation of religious texts and the introduction of the printing press, all of which helped 'to render it completely open, to make it completely accessible to European scrutiny' (p. 83). Not only did this scholarly work contribute to the administrative/military project of Empire-building, but it also helped to reduce the alien otherness of the country into the manageable proportions of a 'field' of knowledge, just as 'Egypt was to become a department of French learning' (p. 83). The Orientalist/Anglicist controversy, and its resurrection in recent years in order to discredit Said's thesis, is taken up for detailed examination in Ms. Sunderajan's paper. My reasons for drawing attention to the relationship of similitude/difference between the Napoleonic project and the Orientalist project is to suggest the implications of Said's thesis—namely that European political appropriation of the East was not a 'sudden, dramatic afterthought 'but' a long and slow process of appropriation . . . transforming itself from being textual and contemplative into being administrative, economic and even military' (p. 210).

The point of slippage here—from addressing the specific material conditions of a discursive field to the subsequent claim that in fact the textual precedes the political—has been debated and criticised so urgently by Indian readers of *Orientalism*, that it might be useful to pause and consider it from all angles. In what senses does Said claim legitimacy for treating colonialism as a textual construct ? Furthermore, how is the power latent in the textual lay the conditions for the power manifest in the military and the political ? What is the nature and extent of textualisation that Said is claiming for the colonial phenomena ? Is it local to Arabic studies ?

Part of the answer lies in understanding the notions of power and textuality that Said employs in *Orientalism*. In the *Introduction* Said says : 'I have found it useful here to employ Michel Foucault's notion of a discourse . . . to identify Orientalism' (p. 3). This statement is corroborated by Said's extensive commentary in Chapter five of *Beginnings* titled 'Abecedarium Culturae : Absence, Writing, Statement, Discourse, Archeology, Structuralism.' Here Said is concerned with making a radical distinction between the Foucauldian notion of textuality on the one hand and the structuralists' and deconstructionists' enterprise on the other. The structuralists, according to him are unable to show why structure structures and therefore shares a fundamental disability with the 'nihilistic radicality' of Derrida, namely that both are unable to account for the human activity of revolutionary change. For Said the Foucauldian

definition of discourse 'differs from all this in its affirmativeness, its progressivism, and its energetic discoveries' (p. 342).

What are the energetic discoveries Said perceives in Foucault ? It seems to me that it would be misleading to examine the Foucauldian conception of discourse without also considering the other end of the pole, which always and everywhere for Foucault is the structure of power. Foucault has tried to think through the relations between power and knowledge by rupturing the habitual ways of thinking about power based on law (what is legitimate and illegitimate power ?) and institutional models (what is the state ?). Thus Foucault proposes a new economy of power-relations from the point of view not of its internal rationality (what it says about the need for its existence) but the 'antagonism of strategies.' Foucault's intention is an analysis of power not from its universal and universalising origins but its origins in the other it represses and outlaws. The specific forms of resistance define and describe the specific configurations of power. To speak of power from the position of resistance to it, to valorize the perceptions of the resisting people or group is to take up a combative and subversive position against its influence. Consider for instance the flexible position it allows Said in the study of nineteenth-century philology. Said is able to violate the hermetically ,ealed space of philology and its claims of grandeur by recognising the power-relations hidden under its disinterested search for truth. Speaking of Renan he notices the imperial sweep of assumption : "He constructs, and the very act of construction is a sign of imperial power over recalcitrant phenomena, as well as a confirmation of the dominating culture and its 'naturalization.' Indeed, it is not too much to say that Renan's philological laboratory is the actual locale of his European ethnocentrism ;" (pp. 145-46). The continuing prestige of a discipline like Orientalism or its parent-discipline nineteenth-century philology will not allow the decoding of its power-relations in the political languages we speak. Said can describe the tyranny of colonial power only by gauging its productivity at the level where it is materialised temporally-spatially into a technology, an institution or a micro-practice.

It is precisely at this theoretical juncture that Foucault rejoins the materialist tradition, at the point where he envisions power/knowledge as discernible only in their material, bodily and institutional practices. Foucault's particular interest is in the material forms that are secreted around a discourse at the exact moment of its institutionalisation. Thus we are made aware of the process by which philology and anthropology acquire the power of self-perpetuation through the archive, the library, the Asiatic society and its modern avatar in area-studies. Philology in its nineteenth-century manifestation invented a doctrine (unlocking the roots of esoteric languages popularised as reduced model of the Oriental by which Oriental languages are reduced to their linguistic roots, then further reduced to a matter of race, racial character,

thus reintroducing, as Said says, the prejudices of racial type and stereo type by a new and impeccable strategy) and also an institutional site. For Said this institutional site, in Ernest Renan's case, consisted of the sealed space of pedagogic practice—the class room in which he instructed the initiate reinforced by the sealed space of the library and the archive Language as it circulates in these institutional sites is obsessed by its origins but never questions the privilege of its statement.

Said argues that similar impulses were operative in nineteenth century anthropology. The discursive hierarchy in Sacy's writings posits the relation between the Orientalist and the Oriental as one in which the former writes, whereas the latter is written about. Anthropology is essentialist in its founding presuppositions, for it reduces every discrete act of the Oriental's behaviour under study to a predictable pre-existing Orientalist essence. Religious-ethnic categories are the basic unit of analysis and only secondarily is the socio-economic category employed. The arbitrariness of the premises of anthropology in the school of Silvestre de Sacy, has been sardonically commented on by Claude Alvarez : the study of the white man is sociology, all the rest is anthropology (*Homo Faber*).

The effectiveness of colonial discourse lies in its ability to veil its 'lowly' origins, to invisibilise its institutional sitings and deflect attention from its material existence. To combat this tendency Foucault emphasises the role of non-discursive elements in constituting a discourse. Thus he speaks of individual texts as statement-events in order to call attention, in Said's words, to 'their status as events, and also their density as things—that is, their duration, and paradoxically, their monumentality, their characters as monuments.'[15] Foucault defines the materiality specific to discourse : 'The rule of materiality that statements obey is therefore of the order of the institution rather than of the spatio-temporal localization, it defines the possibilities of reinscription and transcription—the schemata of use constitutes a field of stabilization.'[16]

This, it seems to me is Foucault's original contribution to the materialist conception of discourse. It enables Said to improvise a convincing argument about the growth of institutional sites which accommodated the Orientalists, systematised their endeavour and dictated the schemata of use, prescribed 'the first law of what can be said'[17] and installed a mode of production which efficiently printed, translated, researched and funded, till in time it acquired the habit of self-legislation and what Said calls the habit of infinite self-reference. My intention here is to gesture towards the kind of influence Said's book has had in the Third World. One example is Gauri Vishwanathan's forthcoming book on the ideology of English literary studies in India. One of her arguments is that the teaching of English literature, its institutionalisation and pedagogic practice originated in colonial India. If that is demonstrably true, then the right of parentage has all too effectively been hidden from us. Colonial discourse, in its moment of institutionalisation invests, it would seem, a good deal of power

is veiling its 'ironic and derisive' origins. To go back to the question posed at the start, it is important to know that in his statements about power/knowledge Foucault disavows any intention of reducing knowledge to its disciplinary function. Knowledge is not the hypothetical base of power nor is it wholly reducible to the practice of power. What gives Foucault's statements about power/knowledge the air of being severely uncompromising is a lifetime's study of the marginalised in the civilization he belongs to. After such knowledge, what forgiveness ?

Said of necessity stands outside the philosophical tradition which Foucault can excoriate and belong to with simultaneous ease. Said cannot assume the authorial space of Foucault, cannot speak from his vantage-point. This obvious truth dissolves the question of Foucault's influence on Said. The acknowledgement of this truth in a spirit of freedom enables the detachment with which Said can speak of the 'drama' of Foucault's work, a drama in which the latter 'is always coming to terms with language as both the constricting horizon and the energising atmosphere within and by which all human activity must be understood . . . Foucaut . . . has been trying to overcome this tyranny by laying bare its working.'[18]

The tyranny of textuality is neither binding nor tyrannical for Said, but a strategic technique of estrangement. For if the African/Indian/Palestinian has been constructed as a semiotic field, and the colonising impulse works in and through language, then we are not confronted by the tyranny of the already-happened of historical events, but instead are faced with the possibilities of re-interpretation, revision and change. Furthermore the materiality of a text provides another kind of insertion/intervention by the Third-World scholar. In his essay "The World, The Text, The Critic" Said provides his own definition of textuality : "A text is a 'being in the world' and has 'ways of existence' that are always 'enmeshed in circumstance, time, place and society-in short, they are in the world, and hence are worldly."[19] Thus the materiality of a text is liberating precisely because it is conditioned by usage, is capable of being appropriated, and contains a discursive space in which each reader and writer can assume the subject-functions.

Said's debt to Foucault lies in learning a way of looking at language which discloses how language permits, legislates and perpetuates discriminations of otherness and sameness. 'This idea of differences' Said says 'can be theoretically extended to include differences among societies.'[20] By contrast Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak has taken the somewhat more aggressive position that Foucault's studies of otherness are not informed by the aggrandisement of space through imperialism, from which she concludes that Foucault's case-studies of mental illness. clinical practice, the prison, sexuality and the rise of the human sciences are 'screen-allegories that foreclose a reading of the broader narratives of imperialism.'[21] Such a serious omission has "the effect of consolidating the ideology

of imperialism" and the illusion that analysis of any space in the West can be self-contained.

Thus Said is not alone in defining his position against and in relation to Foucault. The disruptive power of Said's rewriting the nineteenth century episteme in *Orientalism* lies in the way he is able to read off the assumptions of its originating disciplines (philology, anthropology, Darwinism, the Romantic cult of subjectivity and the beholding eye) and implicate them in the project of naturalising imperialist power. In *Orientalism* Said has been misunderstood as prescribing a will-to-power in all Orientalist texts when he only meant to suggest the suspicion of a relationship. In the course of his ramblings, Said pauses to appreciate the humanist tradition within Orientalism in the person of Raymond Schwab, Louis Massignon, Erich Auerbach to name a few. Yet the consequence of *Orientalism* has been to lay fissures of suspicion along the entire length of nineteenth century discourses, and its before and after. The power of *Orientalism* to rupture, by posing what Terry Eagleton calls 'the genuinely theoretical question . . . (which) is always violently estranging, a perhaps impossible attempt to raise to self-reflexivity the very enabling conditions of a range of routinized practices'[22] can be gauged by the comments of the editor of the *Journal of Asian Studies* :

> *Orientalism* is important because it addresses issues which are (or ought to be) central to the self-conception of scholars who are professionally socialized in and work in one culture but who devote themselves to the study of another culture . . . The essential issue he grapples with—and for which he ought to be read, whether all his arguments succeed or not—is the problem of what might be called the affiliations of knowledge . . . Now, in the final analysis, even an ardent proponent of Said's critical approach would do well to decide where it must all end . . . One can only go on protesting against the tyranny of the document or of language itself for so long ; then one either has to reach some sort of agreement with oneself and get on with the scholarly work at hand, or else one must face up to the fact of ultimate inexpressibility and depart from the scene of the struggle—into silence or into some other walk of life.[23]

The sense of paralysis evident in the above passage is specific to the First World scholars and scholarship that feel besieged by Said's violently estranging question—how is an episteme or world-view conveyed by certain relations of power and what is the political imperative behind it ? It is for the apologists of neocolonialism and the scholars advancing under its protection (in order to refine what Spivak calls the methods of 'efficient information retrieval')[24] to refuse the power/knowledge equation. The continual play between power/knowledge can only cease when the Third-World captures the institutional sites which churn out information about it (is the Indian sub-continent stable or is a revolution imminent ? Is the Punjab question going to destabilize India ?), and represents the Third

World to itself. Until the Third-World becomes self-determining both in its political institutions and the institutions of civil society, Said's question is a necessary warning and political imperative.

Returning to the question with which this essay began—what is the ideology of the Foucauldian method ? The question needs rephrasing because Foucault's endeavour is precisely against the universalism of a method with the power of infinite application, however consoling such a 'grand, enveloping' notion of a model might be. Therefore Said warns against the tendency to extrapolate a method from Foucault's writings which can serve as a 'passkey'[25] to unlock texts. If Foucault's textual practice has any ideological core, it lies in his conception of the social function of the intellectual which necessitates a dedication to uncovering and rupturing the categories of otherness that the ruling classes in a society repress, outlaw and commit to the social margins of the asylum and the prison. It seems to me that the definitive Marxist critique of Foucault's work has yet to be made. As a preliminary however it may be noticed how Said stands outside the family-quarrel of the Western philosophical tradition and perceives, for his purpose, not an irreconcilable difference between Marxism and Foucault but a broad consensus : 'I do not think Foucault and Deleuze are unjustified in seeing their philosophy of decenterment as revolutionary, at least in its reliance upon an intellectual who views his role within his discipline and its institutional supports as an adversary one. The intellectual makes it his task to controvert the dynastic role thrust upon him by history or habit . . . Here Foucault and Deleuze rejoin the adversary epistemological current found in Vico, in Marx and Engels, in Lukacs, in Fanon.'[25]

The notion of the adversarial role of the intellectual has an honourable lineage, and it is noteworthy that Fanon's celebrated statement "colonialism is not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties. It is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence"[26]—occurs at the beginning of a lengthy meditation on the role of the intellectual in the process of decolonisation. Fanon is concerned both with the reactionary consequences of the intellectual training of the colonialist bourgeoisie and the dilemma of the native intellectual. Fanon's prescription of violence obviously refers to what he calls 'violence in action' but his meaning can also be extended to, and be coterminous with Foucault's notion of rupture by theoretical activism.

Several possibilities are opened up by Said's alignment with and raiding of the adversarial traditions of the West. Foremost among them, is the strategic positioning of the post-colonial intellectual, who is able to maintain a perceptual distance vis a-vis the official discourses which is far enough for him to see its rupture and near enough to imagine another episteme. The maintenance of this perceptual distance explains the dichotomy between Foucault's anti-humanism and Said's chosen label of a

humanist. Many readers have felt dissappointed with Said's allegianc the nomenclature of humanism because in the contentious scenario draws in his book, the humanist stance can only be read as weak-kn liberalism. Elsewhere Said has commented on the anomalies of choo the label 'a description for which I have contradictory feelings of affec and revultions.'[27]

The problem here involves much more than Said's political posit for it has to do with the range of perceptual distance that the critic colonialism accommodates himself in, with regard to his situation history and the mutations of his culture. Thus Said's beleagured posi as a academic fighting for the human rights of his fellow-Palestinians f within the privileged world of American academia makes it impossible him to afford the luxury of Foucault's anti-humanism. Said's work a *Orientalism* has moved away from Foucault's theoretical activism preference for an interventionist critical practice.[28] What are the me dological and ideological alliances that the Indian intellectual must s out, in order that he/she may break the hegemony of cultural colonialis In a hostile reading of this essay, it might very well be argued that relationship I have posited, between Foucault-Said-Third World reade itself guilty of inscribing the colonial practices of imitation/dependency terms of source-and-influence. The concluding section is therefore attempt to examine the implications of the final suspicion—has Sa *Orientalism* helped to rejuvenate the bankruptcy of Western research contributed towards making the Third-World into the new site theory ?

Is the Third-World Woman a Site for Theory ?

At the last level of analysis, Said's *Orientalism* posits a series disruptive questions about colonial discourse, the theme of origins and Oriental woman. Said is able to show with considerable acuity how e the most objective and neutral European accounts of the Orient con metaphorical commonplaces about the Orient's female penetrability supine malleability. In the travelogue-genre women are the creature male power fantasy of 'unlimited and undifferentiated sensuality' (p. 1 What Said especially notes is the ways in which Orientalist scholar has been very much a male guild with a male conception of the w which tends to be static, frozen and fixed eternally. Said's brief comm provoke a whole line of inquiry. It is in the commonality of a history subordination that the Orient as other and woman as other can be linl The question that women's studies must address themselves to is—wh the nature of their presence in colonial discour e about them ?

Here it would seem Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has perfor major analytic incisions, both in her pirouetting role of feminist appro ations of narcissism, and her role as wise woman prophesising the pit

in the future. Any statement in her wake might have the unfortunate air of the always-already-happened. I will however attempt to recover my own subject-position by submitting to the final Foucauldian question—who is speaking here? As a teacher of literary texts, I have an obvious investment in Said's valorization of the interpretive activity as a means of social transformation As a woman teacher however I am cautious of the modish trends that seek to give me the dubious privilege of being made the site of and the space in which theories of subaltern consciousness are made and re-made. Is race as illuminating a category as gender and class? If so, what are the points of intersection and displacement?

Here I would like to use as my analytical text Costa Gavras' film 'Hanna K.', both for its dialogue with Western liberal feminism and for its treatment of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. The film has a provocative thesis which unfolds by the constant juxtaposition of the Palestinian's battle with the Israeli state for his right of residence in his ancestral home against the narrative of the woman lawyer's battle with Israeli patriarchy for her right over her body. Hanna is faced with two sets of questions at the beginning of the film. One concerns the theme of origins latent in the Jewish claim to the Biblical lands and the Palestinians' counter-claim to their ancestral home: the other set of questions concerns the theme of origins in patriarchy which obstructs Hanna's right to be a single parent vis-a-vis her Israeli lover's counter-claim to his natural right of dominance as the father of her child.

Hanna gradually discovers the relationship between the two sets of questions. The spectators' recognition of the interconnections between the feminist question and the Palestinian questions however pre-dates Hannah's because of Casta-Govras' characteristic use of the camera to include that which his characters will not or cannot perceive. For instance Hanna and her ex-husband looked down at the city of Jerusalem with the enthusiasm of tourists who may never need to come in contact with the non-Jew Muslim inhabitants of the city, a fact underscored on the sound-track by the Muslim call to prayer. Hanna stumbles into her first legal case defending a bizarre Palestinian who keeps insisting on his right to his house. Subsequently Hanna is drawn into further involvement in the case as she learns how the other history of Jerusalem and the other inhabitants of the city are invisibilized and left out of the reckoning. They can only be evoked at the level of the family photographs mounted on the wall of a house that has been declared a historical monument.

Thus the dispossessed Palestinian in the film may not even claim his ancestral home because it already belongs to the past, his contemporary reality has been seized and put in the past tense. Costa-Gavras' sense of irony at this strategy of the Israeli state is reminiscent of Said's argument in a recent article 'The Ideology of Difference' Here Said demonstrates that the historical persecution of the Jews has been accorded such a sympathetic niche in Western imagination as to make it possible for "the discourse

of Israeli democracy . . .its ideological privileges within Western discourse" (p. 46) to isolate the Palestinians' rights and make it seem different to all other issues of civil rights in the world. This makes it possible to ignore the historical origins of the Palestinians "as a people already in Palestine *before* the advent of Zionist colonisation" (p. 50, emphasis mine). The theme of origins, it would seem is ironised and foreclosed for the Palestinians. As a lawyer fighting for the Palestinian's legal rights and discovering Israeli colonial aggression and self-righteousness, Hanna turns to look at the Palestinian and wonders aloud "Maybe he doesn't even exist."

Such a strategy for the disappearance of the other history of a people interconnects in the film's logic with the strategies for the invisibilisation and privatisation of a woman's history. It is another of the film's ironies that Hanna begins to lose the chivalric protection that had *produced* her notion of individuality at the exact point when she begins to utilise that individuality to question the colonial discourse operative in the law-courts and the patriarchal discourse operative in the home. Costa-Gavras intention seems to be to problematize the assumptions of Western liberal feminism by displacing its narrative in that geographical locale (the Middle East) and political context (the Palestinian question) which seriously jeopardises the assumptions of Western liberalism.

At the end of the film, when Hanna throws out all the men in her life only to find the terrifying might of the Israeli police at her doorstep, we are given a new version of Costa-Gavras' old theme. The state is the most powerful terrorist, and its machine-guns can be turned against its own rebellious women. The film has however contained a new and more hopeful theme, which I understand as Costa-Gavras' conviction that the feminist struggle can attain consciousness about the colonisation of women's bodies and minds only by their consciousness of and alliance with other colonial struggles. This alliance does not entail the subsuming of the feminist consciousness in the primary category of colonial exploitation. By remaining an alliance it serves to disrupt the ideological compact between colonial and patriarchal discourses.

Several problems remain however with the film's text. Hanna represents a special kind of signifier in the colonial text, for she is a Jew, a white woman and a lawyer—all three aspects of her identity cumulatively increasing her privilege. Throughout the film she is perceived by the men around her through the clouding perspective of her sexual allure. Till the very last Hanna is never shown to be critical of being treated as a sex-object. For instance she is complacent about being slapped by her Israeli lover because she is ideologically trained to be indulgent towards the gestures of male possessiveness. We see however that her privilege as sex-object is constantly being encroached upon by the threatening phone-calls and social harrassment due to her harbouring the Palestinian in her house. More insidiously, the early mornings when Hanna stands before the open door of the refrigerator crying because she cannot decide whether to have or not

have the baby, serves to underscore her loneliness and limited value as a sex-object.

In the role of protector Hanna assumes vis-a-vis the Palestinian—as lawyer, as the mother nursing him back to health after his hunger-strike, as lover—is she re-playing the socially ordained roles with disappointing repetitiveness ? In the visual tableau at the law-court, Hanna stands a little above and to the side of the Palestinian. Subsequently the development of the relationship shifts the position somewhat so that the Palestinian stands level with Hanna. Many of my women friends have found the relationship disappointing precisely at the point when it becomes that of lovers. They have been disturbed by the implication that the feminist project in fighting for the cause of oppressed people may lose its seriousness in the anarchy of sexual promiscuity. Such a viewpoint must be taken into account in any discussion of Hanna's assertion of her sexual freedom as against many Indian women spectators' response that this brand of sexual freedom is not relevant to their own struggles. My own understanding is that the tone in Costa-Gavras' film underplays the sexual dimension so that it becomes only one aspect of the relationship, and not necessarily the prescriptive aspect at all. The brief embrace comes at the end of Hanna's protracted spell as a spy on his supposedly terrorist activities, and the embrace is a spontaneous expression of shame and relief that the Palestinian is what he says he is—a human being with the full right to his own humanity and integrity.

If then Hanna continues to stand above and to the side of the Palestinian, except for the momentary equality of lovers, we need to ask where in Costa-Garvas's text is the other signifier—the Palestinian woman? The film opens with her bent over the child in her lap, a figure draped in billowing clothes and outlined against the dark house behind her, waiting for the Israeli police to complete the job of bombarding the house. For the rest of the film she disappears and is not even there on the mental horizons of the characters. In Costa-Garvas' film the Palestinian woman only has the status of the inaugural iconic moment.

If one were however to extend and play with the margins of Costa-Garvas' text, where could the Palestinian women be inserted ? Will she always and everywhere identify with the goals and methods of her brothers and husbands ? Alternately what are the issues and historical junctures at which the Third-World woman distinguishes her problems from that of the national/colonial struggle ? The film does manage to suggest that the young man uses forms of resistance that have historically been associated with women—silence, stealth and self-destruction. However if the Palestinian man is not given any awareness of Hanna's sexual oppression, we are unable to imagine his awareness of the double oppression of the women of his own race.

The film only permits a dialogue with Hanna, and that too only in the frame of reference of Hanna's consciousness. This is a blindness peculiar

to Costa-Garvas' films. He naturalises this frame of reference in *Hanna K.* and *Missing* in such a way that the individualistic stereotypes of the angry father and the non-conformist daughter-in-law in *Missing* as well as the single working mother in *Hanna K.* are valorized in their search for truth and escape the field of indictment. The single individual calling the system into question is still the glorified formula.

Thus the Palestinian woman cannot be inserted into the film because she would displace the seeker of truth (Hanna) or the object of truth (the Palestinian man). Hanna must continue to perform her defiance in the theatre of men, since any alliance between Hanna and her Palestinian female counterpart would disrupt the film altogether. Further, since the film's ideological apparatus is conveyed through Hanna's consciousness, the alliance might be weighted against the Palestinian woman's silence. Hanna will have the power to determine and control the subject-positions in which the other is placed in the film's text. The solutions Hanna is likely to offer her (individualism ? sexual freedom ?) may destroy her more effectively than the Israeli bombardment. Alliances between the women of warring countries are constantly being forged by the women's movement. However, in the film's male vision the category of gender elides colonial power with patriarchal power in an increasingly mystified operation. Thus Hanna can be allowed to loom large on the cinematic landscape because her presence facilitates the absence of the other.

This theme of presence facilitating the absence of the other is analogous to the state-of-art in theory today. The hunt for new sites for doctoral theses, data collection and theoretical reconstruction has aggrandised the Third World. When the avantgarde theorists of subject-production seek to make the Third-World woman the site for dismantling and reassembling their theories, I experience an unease at the mode of my insertion into their text. If then I am the site for rethinking origins and reconstructing individual subjectively, the primitive anthropological subject serving (to use Said's phrase) as "a model for our imaginings of lost plentitude,"[29] how do I offer resistance and how is rupture to be achieved ?

Some preliminary reflections are offered here with a degree of tentativeness. To begin with, I can refuse the privilege of being the site for theory by recognising that just as my femaleness is not a given or a fixed and stable authorial space but a construct of history and culture, by the same token the coloniser and the colonised are not givens but subject-functions which may be occupied by different speakers at different times and circulate in a mobile and dynamic hierarchy of power-relations. At the very least, the colonised subject is marked by class and gender and the variable of individual self-determination. Then how is it possible to privilege the colonised subject in the role of transgressor in a text, as the signifier with the invariant and essential power of subversion ?

Said's *Orientalism* opens up all these questions to debate and discussion. How can we resist the theme of origins in which we are periodically

'discovered' as a bird of exotic plumage and forgotten at the end of each round of the Festival of India show? Post-Said, one of the tasks for Third-World scholarship is clearly that of meticulous documentation of the histories of their own institutions and disciplines that have naturalised colonialism and patriarchy. This documentation will be alert to their material bases, their reasons for coming into being, their founding presuppositions and their function in the politics of class, gender and racial discrimination. Said's example suggests a particular type of training for such scholarship which can be described as a system of interferences: the humility and rigour of the historian, the raiding of archives, the literary critic's suspicion of and devotion to language and the constant aggression of political activism. It is curious how the new critique of colonialism is retracing many of the conflicts that have appeared in the women's movement—the doubt-ridden relationship between feminism and the avant-grade, activism and theory, the possibility of a pure Archimedean space[30] from which to make beginnings, feminism and the theories of subjectivity. Said's *Orientalism* has also risked the judgement of posterity by "contamination" from the Foucauldian method. In doing so, Said's work has contributed to my own understanding of how to resist being re-anthropologised into a site for theory and how to work towards becoming its co-discoursing equal.

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*RAJESWARI SUNDER RAJAN**

After 'Orientalism' : Colonialism and English Literary Studies in India

"AFTER" in my title is intended as homage in several senses : to acknowledge that this essay is "according to" *Orientalism* even in that in several places it is an extended quotation and paraphrase of that work ; to suggest that it intends to play at the margins of Edward Said's book, teasing out its implications and paying attention to at least one of the "tasks" that he acknowledges are left "incomplete" in his study ; and, finally, to indicate that it takes into account Said's own work after *Orientalism*, in particular "The Text, the World, the Critic," and "Opponents, Audiences, Constituencies, and Community."

To be a university lecturer in English in India, as I am, is to be intermittently aware of anomalies in one's position, and to be afflicted by doubts and uncertainties about on's relationship with the object of one's investigation, viz. the English literary text. So in a sense this is an autobiographical account of my attempt to find this position and reach some clarity about this relationship. If for me this process originated with reading *Orientalism* (first published in 1978),[1] it is not to say that it is the only starting point for such an investigation. I merely trace the process here.

Said's thesis is simply put : the Orient comes into being as a *representation* within a discourse identified as Orientalism. Serving as the "other" of Europe, it is seen as variously strange, mysterious, corrupt, beautiful, decadent, etc., while fulfilling a variety of Europe's desires. The energy, scholarship and polemics of Said's work are directed towards stressing the power and systemization of this discourse, which is *not* merely "superstructural." Said finds Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony useful in showing how political society "reaches into the realms of civil society" which are the "cultural" areas (such as the academy, for instance), "and saturates them with significance of direct concern to it" (p. 11).

What are the further implications of this work ? Said himself points us to both empirical and theoretical tasks that await anyone undertaking a critique of Orientalism :

There is still a general essay to be written on imperialism and culture;

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> other studies would go more deeply into the connection between Orientalism and pedagogy, or into Italian, Dutch, German & Swiss Orientalism, or into the dynamic between scholarship and imaginative writing, or into the relationship between administrative ideas and intellectual discipline. . . . One would have to rethink the whole complex problem of knowledge and power. (p. 24)

This is the sanction I invoke for using *Orientalism* as a starting-point for an analysis of the problem of English studies in India.

Said also briefly identifies the position of the Oriental intellectual as he is constituted by Orientalism : he is designated as the "native informant" (p. 324). The "accommodation between the intellectual class and the new imperialism" is a "triumph" of the West (p. 324), in a sense made inevitable because of the West's offer of an easily accessible, codified, institutionalized and virtually commodified knowledge of the Orient It returns to the Oriental a version of the Orient which he accepts and internalizes. Such complicity between the "master discourse" and the "native informant"[2] leads not only to a consolidation of the former, but an empowering of the latter. The colonial intellectual is able to constitute an elite with considerable political power in his own land.

These two aspects of *Orientalism*—the suggestion that there is a connection between Orientalism and pedagogy, and the genealogy of the Oriental intellectual—inhere at its margins. In what follows, I wish to explore these marginal aspects ; firstly to outline the Orientalist/Anglicist controversy, as it appeared in India in the 1830s (of which Said does not take much cognizance) ; to offer a genealogy of the discipline of English literature in the Indian educational system (which involves a brief history of English literary criticism itself as an academic subject) ; to explicate Said's position in "the politics of interpretation," the materiality and aggressiveness of texts, and the implications of the institutionalization of "fields" of knowledge ; and finally to reflect upon the English literature academic in India as post-colonial intellectual.

I

The establishment of English as the language of administration and the medium of educational instruction in India in 1835 signalled the triumph of the "Anglicists," chief of whom was Macaulay whose 1835 Minute provided the justification for such an imposition. English literature as a subject was first established as a result of the 1853 India Act (also authorized by Macaulay), and the recommendations of the report of the Civil Service of the East India Company of 1855, both of which outlined an open competitive examination for civil services in India. It was decided that "English language and literature" would make up a 1000-mark paper in these examinations. Naturally pressure was created upon English universities (which put up a great deal of resistance initially)

to include language and literature as subjects in the curriculum. But it was not until 1893 that Oxford University's administration approved a school of English language and literature. Oxford's first "literary" Professor of English, Walter Raleigh, had however already begun his career as an English literature academic several years earlier at the Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh.[3] It is only one of the ironies of colonial history that English literary studies should have had their beginnings in India and Africa,[4]

These aggressive "Anglicist" projects (which were accompanied by the first major interventionist legislations of the Company, such as the abolition of 'sati,' as well as by significant increase in missionary activity) would appear to be very far removed from the well-meaning and scholarly productions of the Orientalists, their dictionaries, translations, and editions of Sanskrit texts. This at least is the argument of contemporary Orientalists, one of whom has attacked Said in a review as an ignorant and aggrieved Orientalist (in contrast to Nehru, Tagore and Nirad Chaudhuri who regarded the Orientalists as friends and benefactors).[5] Above all, he points out, the Orientalists were responsible for creating the Bengal "Renaissance" which is characterized by him as a "modernistic movement." 'British Orientalism gave birth to the Bengal 'Renaissance' because it helped Indians to find an indigenous identity in the modern world."[7] It did this by making them "conscious of a heritage of their very own", viz. of the Vedas and the Upanishads as "the scriptures of the Aryans"; of a newly created history which authenticated the great period of the Mauryas and Guptas; and even of that "amorphous heritage" shaped into "a rational faith known now as "Hinduism."[8] Such a benign and benevolent view is far removed from Said's "paranoia."

One explanation that is advanced for this difference is that Said's 'orientalism" is too monolithic, and does not take into account the various 'orientalisms" of China, Japan and India, some of which are described as being of an entirely different order from Anglo-French orientalism in West Asia. Said confesses that he is engaged most deeply with the orientalization of this region, and indeed makes considerable investment in his own position as a Western-educated Palestinian in this engagement. But to take the stand that the existence of varieties of orientalism invalidates Said's thesis about Orientalism is to make nonsense of the entire Foucauldian notion of discourse and its implications upon which that thesis is founded. Discourse analysis, such as the one conducted by Said, by "focus [sing] on that which is stable and persistent in the ordering of social reality" in different accounts, "can point to the assumptions shared by those who claim to be opposed to each other or are conceptualized in this manner" – such as the Orientalists and Anglicists .[9]

I am not confident of performing an extensive analysis of the discourse of the Anglicist-Orientalist controversy. But two shared assumptions as they relate to the introduction of the systematic study of English in India, may be pointed out :

—

i) Both Orientalists and Anglicists were implicated in the imperial project, and were therefore concerned with administrative efficiency and efficacy. The Orientalists just as much as the Anglicists were either members of the civil services and judiciary, or missionaries. They only differed in their methods while sharing the same goals. While the former argued that English would provide uniformity and "modernization," the latter held that :

> Upon its [Sanskrit's] cultivation depends the means of native dialects to embody European learning and science. It is a visionary absurdity to think of making English the language of India. It should be extensively studied, no doubt, but the improvement of native dialects enriching them with Sanskrit terms for English ideas must be continued and to effect this, Sanskrit must be cultivated as well as English.[10]

Another Orientalist, W.A. Macnanghten argued that "if we wish to enlighten the great mass of the people of India we must use as our instruments the languages of India . . .our object is to impart ideas, not words . . ."[11] There is no desire evident here to preserve, perpetuate or promote native Indian languages for their own sake or for the sake of any innate superiority, but only a concern for the most effective implementation of British "ideas."

ii) Both groups held a poor opinion of the condition of contemporary India. Since the Anglicist project was to replace already existing native languages and literatures by the superior and advanced language and literature of the colonial powers, they indulged in easy denigration of the former :

> Both nations [India and China] are to nearly an equal degree tainted with the vices of insincerity, dissembling, treacherous, mendacious, to an excess which surpasses even the unusual measure of uncultivated society etc.

Macaulay boasted :

> It is I believe no exaggeration to say, that all the historical information which has been collected to form all the books written in the Sanskrit language is less valuable than what may be found in the most paltry abridgements used at preparatory schools in England. In every branch of physical or social philosophy, the relative position of the nations is nearly the same.[12]

But the Orientalists were equally contemptuous of contemporary Indian culture, politics and peoples ; they, however, sought to displace them with a version of an infinitely superior past culture and advocated the widespread study of Sanskrit. The veneration of the Vedic past was won at the cost of belittling the actual India in which they found themselves. The point is made amply clear in an essay by Gerald and Natalie Sirkin "The impracticability of the vernaculars for higher education, and the excessive delay that would result from the use of the vernaculars as the medium of instruction, were generally agreed upon by both parties . . .

The Orientalists were not prepared to argue against the predominant view that the objective of higher education in India was the introduction of useful knowledge that is, Western learning."[13]

Gayathri Spivak shows the complicity between the East India Company officials' endorsement and authorization of Hindu rulers in the native states (at the expense of the 'aboriginals'), and the Orientalist burst of poetry inscribed on the doorway of the Indian Institute at Oxford celebrating the friendship of India and Britain by designating India as "Aryavarta" (the land of Aryas).[14] The Orientalist task of revivalism also required, we may note in passing, the entire suppression of the past five hundred years of Muslim rule. An "essential" India was discovered, dusted off, and resurrected as a compensation for "the obvious decrepitude and political impotence of the modern Oriental" (*Orientalism*, p. 79).

Thus the exigencies of colonial rule dictated the opposed positions of both Anglicists and Orientalists—and both were postulated upon the diagnosis of India as decadent and chaotic, and consequently in need of British rule as civilizing mission. A scenario of "good Orientalists" *versus* "bad Anglicists" which highlights their differences overlooks the common orientalizing project of both. For argument's sake we may further point out that Indian orientalism did not die out in 1835 ; while it ceased to have official British patronage, it continued to flourish under German and French scholarship. Max Muller, who held the chair of Orientalism at Oxford, began to bring out the *Sacred Books of the East* from 1875 ,[15] and it appears that a new breed of American Orientalists (*pace* David Kopf) is alive and well.[16]

Said's deep distrust of Orientalist scholarship is legitimized by his close reading of several Orientalist texts, and the disclosure of their relationship as they constitute a discursive field. That this discourse was not—and could not be—a rarefied, immaterial and transcendent realm is proved in the Orient most dramatically by Napoleon's invasion of Egypt :

> His plans for Egypt . . . became the first in a long series of European encounters with the Orient in which *the Orientalist's special expertise was put directly to functional colonial use* ; for at the crucial instant when an Orientalist had to decide whether his loyalties and sympathies lay with the Orient or with the conquering West, he always chose the latter, from Napoleon's time on. (p. 80). [emphasis added]

The knowledge/power equation that is revealed here is, acknowledgedly difficult to sustain from a humanist standpoint, where knowledge is presented as a disinterested search for the truth, and as a broadening of horizons. (That such a presentation is profoundly ideological is another matter.) It is particularly interesting therefore to compare Raymond Schwab's *Oriental Renaissance* and Said's *Orientalism* together. (Said expresses deep admiration for and indebtedness to Schwab's pioneering work.)[17] We might see them as engaged in a profoundly enriching dialogue. While Schwab's is a great humanist work, celebrating the second Western

Renaissance in the discovery of the Orient, and announcing an "inte humanism," Said discusses the *"enormously systematic discipline by* wh European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Ori politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, a imaginatively," through that same discovery (p. 3).

Though Said reads prefigurations of Foucault's "archival formatio in Schwab's work, it remains a narrative, a rise-and-fall account Orientalism. Said's synchronic method on the other hand resemb Foucault's closely: sees the dispersal, the changing lineaments, t persistence of Orientalism into the contemporary West's representations the Orient. (The current deluge of Raj nostalgia in the West, not least the United States which had no colonial connections with India, can seen from this point of view as part of a discursive formation that inclu Union Carbide's defence of the gas leak in Bhopal. Inefficient natives a well-intentioned white rulers/multinational corporate executives feature both representations.)

It does not avail us much to state that *all* knowledge collabora with power; the specific modes of that collaboration have to be detail as Said does in *Orientalism* in the case of Anglo-French involvement the Middle East. Similarly much more detailed investigation is necess to show that Britain's prescription of a desired knowledge *for* India based upon its own diagnosis/knowledge *of* India, which in turn is inextr able from the project of imperialism. The imposition of English langua and literature must be shown to be postulated upon a certain knowledge and for, the natives. Anglicists and Orientalists will then be seen collaborators. The colonial project required both giving the ruler patriotic sense of the possession of a great literature of his own, as well impressing the native with the cultural superiority of the ruler. Tl double duty was achieved at a stroke by the introduction of Engli literature into school and college curricula in England and India. H the ideology of this study changed ? Can we continue to view this acaden activity as an Orientalizing enterprise ?

II

To answer these questions we must follow Said into his theoretic and political reflections upon "the text, the world, and the critic,"a upon the nature of "opponents, audiences, constituencies, and community

These reflections impinge upon Said's study of historical Orientalis He notes that the beginnings of philology in the West coincide with t Higher Criticism, and in the person of Renan the two disciplines converg What Renan did by designating the semitic religious texts (the Torah, t Koran, and the New Testament) as philologically "inferior," and therefo not of divine origin, was to replace God by the Orientalist. This was enormous access of power, achieved by the textualist at a single stroke

Renan's achievement explodes "the fallacy of imagining the life of texts as being pleasantly ideal and without force or conflict."[19] On the contrary, texts spring from "ethnocentrism and the erratic will to power;"[20] they are, as Nietzsche pointed out, "facts of power, not of democratic exchange."[21]

Just as the view that knowledge is disinterested seeking has its ideological support, so also, and for the same reasons, the materiality of the text, the fact of its *production*, is concealed. So great is the prestige of the book and the written word that it is placed above materiality. But Said stresses Marx's contention that discourse is systematically *produced*; it "is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures."[22] The emergence of fields and disciplines is not a 'natural' phenomenon, but comes about as a result of prohibitions and sanctions. Since the text exercises such power, the most apt metaphor for the discursive situation is the colonizer-colonized relationship. Said quotes Stephen Dedalus' fretful recognition :

> The language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words *home*, *Christ*, *ale*, *master*, on his lips and on mine ! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit.[23]

There is also Naipaul's lament :

> The vision was alien. It diminished my own and did not give me the courage to do a simple thing like mentioning the name of a Port of Spain street . . . It helps in the most practical way to have a tradition . . . the English language was mine ; the tradition was not.

Our relationship with the text, as these writers show, is enmeshed with our historical position.

How do these notions of textuality and discourse serve our reading of the present situation of English literary studies in India ?

Even if we take 'text' only in its most limited and restricted sense of the prescribed text in the classroom, we can see that for all the apparent randomness with which texts are picked for inclusion in a syllabus in a university, there is still a very tight circle drawn around the range of texts that are eligible for classroom study. The constitution of a syllabus (as of a field) consists as much of the *exclusion* of what does not belong to it as the inclusion of what does. The extremely purist notion of what goes into the field of literary studies has by and large kept out any non-English, contemporary or non-'literary' texts. Invariably the texts in an English literature course have canonical status. Canons, as Said reminds us, are not "an ideal cosmos of ideally equal poems," but "a system of forces institutionalized at some expense by the reigning culture."[24] The "reigning" or hegemonic authority is invariably the Western university whose influence upon all academic functioning in India, and, in particular, upon the teaching of English and American literatures, is very strong. Ideology inheres even in the forms of a structure ; thus, as long as the unit of study is the 'text-book,' the methods that will best serve pedagogy (class-room

teaching, examinations, term papers) will continue to be explication, close reading, exegesis, text-and-context discussions: *in short, the whole New Critical, liberal-humanist methodology that has already proved pedagog.. cally so viable in the Western university.*

Having recently been associated with a syllabus revision programme ·t my university, I have come to realize that no ideal notions of "excel- ·nce" or "suitability" determine the choice of texts. Rather, an immense ıd complex network of forces comes into play which includes such uestions and considerations as :

(i) Who shall edit the work (select, provide notes etc.) ? Upon such ıoice lies the fate of teacher for whom this editorial work will count as an :ademic 'publication'.

(ii) Should a work be edited/chosen anew? Or should existing, adily-available, pre-edited works be chosen ?

(iii) Will the inclusion of new courses displace other (non-English) ıurses ? Will the dropping of existing courses lead to retrenchment of ıglish teachers ? How many classes a week, how many students, how any teachers, how many colleges are affected ?

(iv) Will we teach language or literature, or language through erature ?

What/whose literature ?

(Translations are ruled out, and the "saturation" of students with ıglish, "as in Max Muller Bhavan or the Alliance Francaise," or in the ıching of Asian immigrants to Britain, is recommended.)

(v) Teachers of undergraduate colleges (for whose students the urses are intended) have little more than recommendatory powers in the 'ection of texts. A massive hierarchical edifice consisting of the university ›st-graduate English department, a committee of courses made up of ıior teachers, the Faculty of Arts, and the Academic Council exists to thorize a syllabus revision.

All these matters are laid out not for criticism (which is all too easily lulged in), but as an exposure of the actual power relations that obtain thin the academic system in the prescription of texts for study.

The power structure of texts is an indication of their materiality, i.e., ›y are socially and economically determined. The most forceful proof of s characteristic is their commodity status. School and college textbooks : the publications with the highest guaranteed sales (the piratical blication of bazaar texts and notes is a major ancillary business). In a ; Indian university there may well be close to twenty-five thousand dents studying English in any given year. The presence of one text in : syllabus necessitates the displacement of another text : this exhibition aggression and will to power is, as Said holds, an inherent characteristic the text. In India foreign publishing firms have until recently virtually l monopoly over the publication of prescribed texts in English syllabi. ford University Press, Macmillans, Orient (!) Longmans, and now

Penguin, have found the market in India, chiefly the academic market large enough, and the labour sufficiently cheap, to set up their branches in India. They are also the most prestigious publishers of academic and scholarly work.

If we turn to English literary critical studies in India, we find that most Indian scholars produce their work at foreign universities (usually as doctoral dissertations) ; such work invariably reflects the specific conditions and reigning ideologies of those systems. Homi Bhabha, in a brief discussion of Third World literary critical practice, shows how even "nationalist" criticism works within the constraints of a hegemonic Leavisite ideology.[25] Also, to a very large extent English language and literary studies in India function under the aegis of two quasi-governmental foreign agencies, the British Council and the USIS. These organizations perceive English and American literatures as the cultural products of their respective countries and promote them accordingly. There exists therefore a well-established system of funding, grants, patronage, publications, libraries, centres for advanced studies, seminars and workshops that is administered by these institutions Not surprisingly, literary criticism in India is defined by the very material conditions created by these organizations.

Speaking of a "politics of interpretation," Said demands a "methodological and disciplinary self-questioning," where "methodological" means "a questioning of the structure of fields and discourses themselves."[26] Said speaks of course of and from within the specific academic situation of Reagan's America. But we can see the same embroilment of academics within the circumstances of the production of texts and criticism in the English literary system in India. Having been constituted unproblematically as (lesser) members of the community of western readers of western texts, we find ourselves as critics (a) naturalised into the role of western-type critics (b) but suffering from a sense of inferiority or lack of worth as second-order critics (lacking in true language facility, sufficient scholarship etc), and (c) experiencing a loss of natural identity and alienation from lived experience. If we were to consciously enter into a discursive relationship with the western text, we might be able to achieve an alienation from it that will enable us to treat it as the text of an alien culture, with behaviour patterns, literary traits, conventions and linguistic usage that require demystification and, at the very least, problematization. To thus lodge the text within the confines of a western discourse would be to deny its implicit claims to universality.

A significant change to a specifically Third World perspective on the colonial text requires more : it calls for a radical politicization of English literary studies, both pedagogical and critical, in India.

IV

'Learn your letters. They're not enough, but still learn them.'

'Grab hold of the book, you hungry one. It's a weapon.'

—Bertolt Brecht, in *The Mother*

I want to explore in this section, with great tentativeness and son *trepidation, some ways in which the Indian teacher of English literatu might enter into relationship with the Western text in his own work as a critic, as well as in the classroom.*

Said's work is an example of the most obvious project the Third World academic can undertake, the critique of the imperialist ideology of the first-world text. Said's post-structuralist epistemology—the dethroning of the primacy of the knowing subject, the analysis of discourse, the collusion of knowledge with power—seems to be particularly empowering for this project. But we observe also the happy results of the Marxist-deconstructionist methodology employed by subaltern historians in India, and the fruitful feminist-deconstructionist-psychoanalytical tools deployed by Gayathri Spivak. The critiquing of post-colonial discourse, it already becomes apparent, is done "with the best tools that it can *itself* provide." [emphasis mine.] Spivak argues further: "I am . . . far from averse to learning from the work of Western theorists, although I have also learned to insist upon marking their positionality as indeed the positionality of any investigating subject." She warns against the simple substitution of the "lost figure of the colonized": "Part of our 'unlearning' project is to articulate that ideological formation [of a 'monolithic Third World Woman'] into our object of investigation."[28] Clearly the critique of colonial discourse is a challenging and far from easy enterprise.

The dangers have to be recognized at the outset. It is all too easy to proceed from our awareness of our historically—and ideologically—enshrined colonialist relationship to English literature, to a search for "roots" and origins and the recovery of a "lost" native tradition. Such a simple either/or alternative seeking can be misleading. We are historically constituted to the extent of not being able to afford "self-marginalisation" (the phrase is Spivak's), by alienating ourselves from all Western knowledge. More crucially, in our country and in the present political conditions, nationalistic anti-imperialism takes the form of a particularly violent Hindu revivalism whose backlash is generally felt by the nation's minority communities. We can only erect for ourselves a kind of distant, privileged, and bricolur relationship with Western theory in our critical cultural projects.

The third possibility—and danger—is the kind of "synthesis" found and celebrated by David Kopf in the work of such national Indian figures as Vivekananda, Keshab Chandra, and Ram Mohun Roy or Tagore's fictional Gora who plumps for a kind of "universal humanism" in the face of the discovery of his white identity.[29] The term "synthesis," I would suggest, is used to suggest a more-or-less amicable adjustment of different ideas. In place of this reconciliation, we might diagnose and support a

subversive relationship between the Indian nationalist intellectual and western literature. The liberal-humanist plank of the nationalist movement was created by such individuals as Nehru who would use Burke, Macaulay or Toynbee against the ruler—just as Gandhi showed up the subversive possibilities of the Sermon on the Mount. "Literature in the broader sense" has always been, after all, "a powerful source of knowledge, of history, and hence of challenge and resistance." Working-class readers, these critics go on to point out, have always found in Dickens, say, "an answering anger and a powerful laughter."[31] It is in this sense that the Indian intelligentsia that constituted the elite of the nationalist movement turned the knowledge of English culture forced upon them into an effective tool for argument, resistance and subversion. Needless to say, we have long since ceased to make such strategic use of our enforced knowledge, and have slid into passive consumerism.

A final speculation is offered on the Indian reader and the Western text. In a recent essay upon the authority of the English "book," Homi Bhabha discusses the forms of ambivalence created in that authority by a native response marked by "camouflage, mimicry, black skins/white masks."[32] By seeking out moments of subaltern resistance, often covert, we might "even seek to change the often coercive reality that they [the words of the master] so lucidly contain."[33] Such a project seems well in tune with his own work. He narrates the tale of Anund Messeh, an early Indian missionary, who seeks to explain the Bible to a group of natives. The natives proceed to question and argue with Anund Messeh, and then promise that they will "perhaps" be baptized "next year" since "now we must go home to the harvest." Bhabha reads in this tale the drama of the destabilization of authority, and the beginning of a "specific colonial appropriation" of the Book.[34]

We ourselves, as academics, do not dare to make such an appropriation. Perhaps what we see in our classroom of our students' responses to "the book"—the canonical English literary text—can be read in the light of the parable of Anund Messeh, as such appropriation.

Confronted by the double authority of the book itself and the English teacher endorsing and buttressing it by painful explication, they read and listen patiently in the classroom. Then they go back to the colourfully translated Hindi version of the text in a crib and memorize the "proper" answers from the same source, thus making both text and teacher redundant ; or they improvise in halting English their expressions of sympathy for Desdemona and Joe Keller and make clear their incomprehension at original sin, and contribute their own malapropisms to an account of Mrs. Malaprop's "contribution to the humour of the play."[35]

To be Anund Messeh is to be cast in the role of the colonial subject as teacher/translator/mediator and to have no share in either colonial authority or colonial resistance. It is time to confront the text by

displacing the author-function and asking instead Foucault's questions :

> What are the modes of existence of this discourse ? Where has i been used, how can it circulate, and who can appropriate it for him self ? What are th- places in it where there is room for possibl subjects ? Who can assume these various subject-functions ?[86]

This is the exercise Said has initiated in *Orientalism.*

1. Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London and Henley : Routledge and Kegan Pau 1978. All further references are to this edition, and page numbers are ind cated in the text.
2. *Master Discourse, Native Informant* is the name of a forthcoming book b Gayathri Chakravarty Spivak, Columbia University Press.
3. Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848-1932* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1983) ; Chapter 3, "A Civilizing Subject," provides a complet picture of the beginnings of this movement.
4. Janet Batsleer et al, *Rewriting English : Cultural Politics, Gender and Clas* London and New York : Methuen & Co., 1985, p. 23.
5. David Kopf, "Hermeneutics Versus History," *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol XXIX, No. 3, May 1980, pp. 495-506.
6. Kopf, p. 500.
7. Kopf, p. 501.
8. Kopf, p. 502.
9. Lata Mani, "The Production of an Official Discourse on *Sati* in Early Nineteentl Century Bengal," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXI, No. 17 (April 26 1986) ; Review of Women Studies, p. 32.
10. A.A. Wilson, an Orientalist at Oxford. Quoted in Kopf, p. 505.
11. Kopf, p. 504.
12. John Mill and Macaulay respectively. Quoted in Kopf, p. 504.
13. Gerold and Natalie Robinson Surkin, "The Battle of Indian Education : Macau lay's Opening Salvo Newly Discovered," *Victorian Studies* 14 (1971), 409-11 These authors, it may be pointed out, also unproblematically accept the equatioi of "Useful Knowledge" with "Western learning,"and both with the use of th English language.
14. Gayathri Chakravarty Spivak, "The Rani of Sirmur : An Essay in Reading th Archives," *History and Theory*, Vol. XXIV, No. 3 (1985), p 264.
15. See Raymond Schwab, *Oriental Renaissance : Europe's Rediscovery of India an the East, 1680-1880* Translated by Gene Patterson-Black and Victor Reinkin (New York : Columbia University Press, 1984), First published 1950.
16. David Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance*, (Berkeley : Univer sity of California Press, 1969).
17. Edward Said, Introduction to *Oriental Renaissance*, reprinted from *Daedalu* (Winter 1976), Vol. 105, No. 1.
18. Edward Said, "The Text, the World, the Critic," in Josue V. Harari ed. *Textua Strategies : Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (London : Methuen & Co., 1980), p. 180.
19. *Ibid.*,
20. *Ibid*, p. 184.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 181.
23. James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (New York : Vilking, 1964), p. 189. Quoted in "The Text, the World, the Critic," p. 182.

24. "The Text, the World, the Critic," p. 186.
25. Homi Bhabha, "Representation and the Colonial Text : A Critical Exploration of Some Forms of Mimeticism," in Frank Gloversmith ed. *Theory of Reading* (Sussex : Harvester Press, 1964).
26. Edward Said, "Opponents, Audiences, Constituencies, and Community," *Critical Inquiry* 9 (September 1982), p. 16.
27. London : Eyre Methuen, 1978. Quoted in Batsleer, p. 37.
28. "Can the Subaltern Speak ? Speculations on Widow-Sacrifice," *Wedge* 7/8 (Winter/Spring, 1985), p. 120.
29. Kopf, pp. 497-98.
30. Batsleer, p. 37.
31. *Ibld.*
32. Homi Bhabha, "Signs taken for Wonders . Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Autumn 1985). p. 162.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Bhabha, "Signs etc.," p. 161.
35. These references are to texts in the Delhi University Pass Course English syllabus: *Othello, All My Sons, Lord of the Flies, The Rivals.*
36. Michel Foucault, "What is an Author ?" in *Textual Strategies*, p. 160.

*KALPANA SAHNI**

Oriental Phantoms

F. Dostoevsky's views on the East

"The great eagle of the Orient will revolt and the Western islanders will start weeping It will sieze three kingdoms . . and fly to the south in order to retrieve that which has been lost. And God will shower love and mercy on the Oriental eagle for its task is difficult. Its two wings will glitter over the heights of Christianity."[1]

THIS quotation from Dostoevsky's *Diary of a Writer* is remarkable in more ways than one. In the first place it is an excellent example for research scholars on how not to quote! Dostoevsky took this quotation from a sixteenth century book of Prognostics by Johannis Lichtenberger, a German. The Russian writer decided that the great eagle had to be from the Orient—so he decided, on his own, to incorporate the words "of the Orient" in the first sentence. The other sentences were taken from different parts of the book and made to seem one coherent whole! And not just that. In this long quotation (parts of which I have left out) Dostoevsky decided to correct Lichtenberger's prophesies.[2]

The other, far more important aspect of this quotation for us is in that it reveals Dostoevsky's religious and political views in the last decade of his life. Expressions like "love" and "mercy" stand alongside "sieze" and "revolt". He sees Russia's mission (for that is the great eagle of the Orient) in the name of Christianity, as a saviour and simultaneously a conquerer. The conquest that is being implied is that of Constantinopol at the time of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877.

But why does Dostoevsky make it a point to equate Russia with "the Orient"? Only by clarifying this term in its historical context can we understand the writer's stand and the influences that moulded it.

The East-West division was brought about in the 5th century A.D. and pertained to the division of the church, the East being the Orthodox church and the West—the Catholic. By the 17th century this split had widened. The west was the Greco-Roman Christian world as opposed to the East which included countries from Turkey to China. (Today we are seeing

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yet another questionable division made by the West—the First, Second and Third World Countries). Thus, when Johannis Lichtenberger's book appeared the Orient, or the East, still related primarily to those nations which had adopted the Orthodox church—and Russia was one of them. This outlook remained in the European consciousness even at the time of Dostoevsky.

The connotation of 'Oriental' gradually changed and became applicable to the Asian colonies of the European nations. The vast body of 'research' into any and every aspect of the East became known as Orientalism. And because this field developed side by side with the expansion of colonialism, no aspect of Orientalist studies is devoid of political undertones for it is "a formidable structure of cultural domination."[3] Needless to say, the English and the French were the pioneers in this field. Although the colonisers could not shut their eyes to the East's enormous cultural heritage, it was the European yardstick that was used to measure it and pronounce judgements on it. Orientalism became "a method of controlling what seems to be a threat to some established view of things."[4] Armed as they were with a monotheistic religion, a Cartesian logic and the Rennaisance concept of man's supremacy over nature the European colonisers could not comprehend India's polytheism of over 3000 gods, a holistic view of man and nature, all of which dictated the aesthetics, art and philosophy of this country. India had to have one holy book akin to the Bible Frantic efforts in this direction ultimately led to the translation of one chapter from the Indian epic, *the Mahabharata, the Bhagawata Gita* and pass it off to the West as the Indian Bible—a belief held to this day by many in Europe (Imagine a chapter of the *Iliad* or *The Odyssey* being used for similar purposes). What could not be understood had to be explained--and not just explained but expounded with a feeling of condescension and superiority, i.e. from a position of strength.

> "The West is the actor the Orient a passive reactor. The West is the spectator, the judge and jury, of every facet of Oriental behaviour."[5]

The attitude of England and France towards the Middle and Near East, though fundamentally the same, was of a slightly different nature. For one thing Islam was geographically adjacent to Europe and always stood as a more direct challenge, whether militarily, politically or intellectually. Islam, a syncretic religion incorporating elements of Judaism, Christianity and Zoroashtrianism, was monotheistic. The religious war of *jehad* launched by Islam was comparable to the Crusades. The Europeans could not come to terms with the territorial expansian of 'this heretic faith', Islam, in the middle ages. (A century after Mohammed's death the Islamic empire extended from Spain to China). Thus, both fear and denigration of Eastern barbarity and cruelty[6] intermingled in European works pertaining to the Middle East whereas one's own were glossed over.[7]

We now turn our attention to nineteenth century Russia. Peter the Great's "window to Europe" ushers in a century of European culture, including philosophy, literature and art into Russia. Russia gets rapidly

Europeanized. Aristotelian poetics, Cartesian logic and Hegelian diale become an integral part of Russian thinking just as the writings Rousseau, Goethe or Byron. "Oriental themes" with their flavour of exotic, the unknown and the 'primitive' find their way into the works of Romantics in an attempt to rid themselves of the rigidity of Neo-classı rules. Pushkin follows in the footsteps of his mentor, Byron, by turning the Orient (the Circassians in *The Prisoner of Caucasus*, *The Gypsies*, *Fountain of Bakhchisarai*). The Caucasus and its people are depicted Lermontov. Zhukovsky's search into the nature of ideal love leads hin translate *Nala and Damayanti*, one story from the *Mahabharata*, in 1844.

The Russian intelligentsia had access to the English, French German works in the original. A point worth noting here is that n works on Orientalism to be initially translated into Russian were from above mentioned languages. The first translation of the *Bhagawata* (and *the Koran* into Russian in the 18th century was done from Eng! and French respectively. Washington Irwing's English rendering of *Koran* was translated into Russian in 1857. Russian Orientalist stu came up much later, i.e. in the latter half of the 19th century. Th initial Russian attitudes to the Orient were, to a large extent, prede mined by those of the French and English and later, German. "T examination of things Oriental", so succinctly put forward by Edw Said, "was based more or less exclusively upon a sovereign west consciousness."[8]

European nationalism and a supercilious attitude towards the East cultural heritage mark V. Belinsky's review of Zhukovsky's translation the Indian tale, *Nala and Damayanti*. European yardsticks of aesthe are applied to an alien culture about which the Russian critic is mis formed. While acknowledging the need for such translations, Belins adds: "For us Europeans this poetry is interesting as a fact of the primit world, but we cannot sympathize with its superstition and ugly poetics He further maintains: "The individual is the base of the European spi for whom, therefore, man is above nature."[10] There is an ironical tw here. The Russian intellectual thinks like a European, sees himself as c and yet is not a European for the Europeans. The Russian critic w misinformed about India and Indians who, for him, were "a great trib believing in an amorphous matter which destroys man's individuality.[11] was more natural for Belinsky, given his background, to look upon *I Iliad* as the cradle song of civilization.

More than ten years later another Russian critic, N. Dobrolyubov, his article on *The East India Company* shares many of the English ai French attitudes to India. Attempts at objective appraisals (as in t above case and in Dobrolyubov's review of *the Koran*) end up with t repetition of a colonial mentality.[12]

European attitudes towards the Orient were also more readi acceptable to the Russians because of their close encounter with tl

Mongol Tartars who ruled over Russia for over two and a half centuries (13th—15th A.D.). Fear and hatred intermingle in the Russian mind towards the conquerers. With time this feeling encompasses Islam which the Mongol-Tartars adopt. Nowhere are these sentiments more in evidence than in the Russian language. Given below are some examples of it from Dal's dictionary :

Tartar—dishonest, cunning, sly
Poganyi (rascal)—infidel, Jew, Muslim etc.
Poganit' (verb)—to pollute
Asian—inhabitant of Asia (a swear word), rude, uneducated person
Asiatic—savage, crude
Mohammed—(a swear word in the Don region), a thief, swindler, scoundrel.

With the gradual rise of the Russian Empire and the simultaneous weakening of various Asian countries this feeling of might and disdain became more and more ingrained If 15th century Russia still bowed before the might of the Ottoman Empire and sought permission to use the Black Sea for navigational purposes and trade, 18th century Russia wrenched the Crimean peninsula from the Turks and felt it was its right to do so. The expansionist policy, primarily eastwards and southwards, initiated by Ivan III, was successfully pursued by all subsequent rulers. By the end of the 19th century Russian rule extended to Siberia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kirghizia and Turkmenia in Central Asia ; Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan in the South, Poland, Finland and Lithuania in the West. Russia became a formidable colonial power to be reckoned with. Its colonial interests were to constantly clash with those of France and England. In the 19th century this bone of contention was primarily centred round the Dardanelles. Russia's repeated attempts at gaining an outlet into the Mediterranean met with a strong resistance from France and England. The scene of the war was Turkey and its domains, a weak Turkey and which had been turned into an economic vassal of France and England, both intent on dismembering it.

It is against this backdrop that one should approach Dostoevsky's views on the East, which, in the latter years, were concerned primarily with Turkey and the Russo-Turkish War. The quotation cited at the beginning of the paper highlights the contradictions which Dostoevsky shared with some of the leading Russian intellectuals of the 19th century.

Prior to his arrest in 1849 Dostoevsky's references to the East are confined to a few stray remarks neutral in character. That is because the writer shows no particular interest in the Orient. In the story, *The Double* :

> Golyadkin recalls the Arab emirs, their green turbans, which they wear as a sign of their relationship to Mohammed, the Prophet . . . from there his thoughts shifted to the Turks and Turkish sandals[13].

In another place in the same story :

> Golyadkin-senior noted that in some way the Turks are correct whe they call out to God even in their sleep. Later, disagreeing with th slander of various erudite men against the Turkish Prophet, Moham med, he recognises him to be, in his own way, a great politician.[14]

Dostoevsky, in passing, mentions the Indian boa constrictor (*The Doubl* and the Arabian Thousand and one Nights Tales (*A Foul Joke*). It is on after his release from penal servitude that references to Turkey and to th Prophet Mohammed start occupying a more prominent place in the writer works. Dostoevsky was familiar with the French version of *the Kora* which he read in Semiplatinsk (where he served after his release from th Omsk prison, from1855—1856). References to Mohammed are made i *Crime and Punishment* where the Prophet is equated with Napoleon an Caesar—the super men, who stop at nothing to achieve their aim: Mohammed's epileptic fits feature in the novels *Idiot*, *The Possessed*, *Th Raw Youth*. However, nowhere more forcefully are Dostoevsky's views o Islam, Turkey and the Orient expressed as in his *Diaries of a Writer* o 1876, 1877, 1881 and in his last novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*.

What a change in the tone ! Gone is the neutrality that charac terises his earlier works. Pages devoted to "The Eastern Question", t Turkey, its people and religion exude an intense feeling of hatred. Fc Dostoevsky now the Turks are "profane Hagarite Mohammedans "(*Diar of a Writer* , 1877) or else "this savage, vile Muslim horde, a swor sworn enemy of civilization " There is even a wish "that these blood sucker Turks break their necks" As though such adjectives were insuffi cient the writer goes into minute details on the sadistic tortures th Bulgarians were subjected to by the Turks. These scenes seem to haun Dostoevsky so much that he keeps reverting back to them. The finally culminate in the *Pro and Contra* chapters of *The Brother Karamazov*. In the most poignant passage of the novel where Ivan Karamazov puts the question whether universal harmony should b achieved at the price of a single child's tears—Dostoevsky enumerate an entire range of atrocities perpetrated by adults against children Children are shown being tortured by their own parents, by feuda landlords, by society. Amongst these are pages devoted to Turkisl soldiers fondling a babe in arms, throwing the laughing child into th air and then, in the presence of the mother, catching the falling bab on the edge of a razor thin bayonet. And Alyosha, who epitomise the Christian ideal of love and mercy, on hearing all this, is compelle to call for revenge. One might have not taken note of the scenes o Turkish atrocities had it been confined to this novel. One can also argu that Dostoevsky attempted to show different types of torture and this wa only one of them. True. But there are questions which continue to bother How is it that in this very novel in which a whole chapter i devoted to the Spanish Inquisition which was no less barbaric—there i

no mention of its heinous crimes. If this question is considered inappropriate for it attempts to intrude into a creative writer's laboratory of work, then one must revert back to his *Diaries* where Dostoevsky, like a man possessed, is propagating aggression against Turkey. He is confident that Constantinopol is going to be captured by Russia and the Turks taught a lesson.

How is one to approach this radical change in Dostoevsky's outlook to that of the earlier years? The seeds of this change are to be found in one of the few poems written by the writer, *On the European Events of 1854.*

The Russo-Turkish war of 1854 in which Britain and France sided with Turkey was viewed by Dostoevsky as a betrayal of the civilized nations.

> The Christian siding with the Turk against Christ.
> The Christian—a defender of Mohammed.
> Shame on you—apostates of the cross.[15]

It is here that Dostoevsky, for the first time clearly states that the East (the Orient) will be taken over by Russia.

> It is not for you to decide Russia's fate......
> The East—is hers! To her are hands outstretched
> Untiringly by a million generations.
> And ruling over the ancient Asia
> She gives to all a new life.
> And renaissance to the ancient Orient. . . .[16]

Russia's expansionist policy is justified. The messianic role of Russia guided by "the cross, the faith and the throne" is also put forward for the first time. Over the years these ideas get crystallised in Dostoevsky's works.

Simultaneously, they are closely linked with the writer's private search for answers that were tormenting him. While in prison Dostoevsky realised the enormous abyss lying between the intellectuals and the masses. He began to question his utopian-socialist past. The onslaught of capitalism in Russia with all the socio-economic contradictions ensuing thereafter such as the moral depravity of the 'haves' and the poverty, misery and humiliation suffered by the 'have nots' forced Dostoevsky to seek fresh answers to social, ethical and philosophical problems. He attempted to rid himself of his youthful radicalism and Western ideas and find salvation in the Russian Orthodox church and the simple Russian folk. He starts believing in absolute monarchy and nationalism. But it is one thing to turn one's back on one's past and quite another to be rid of it when it has become so much a part of one's being. Speaking about one's beliefs the narrator in *Memories from the House of the Dead* says that one "has suffered so much in life for them and paid such a heavy price to attain

hem ... that it is practically impossible to break away from them."[17] Thus, this inner contradiction between his earlier beliefs and those of the ater period (portrayed and voiced so brilliantly through his characters in iis novels) will run parallel in the writer's fiction of this period. The Christian concept of love, compassion, mercy and suffering are counter-posed to violence and a revolutionary overthrow of power. A European ensibility clashes with Russian nationalism. But if in his novels Dostoevsky, one of the most honest writers, identifies with most of his heroes and llows for a polyphonic discourse that shows different paths to salvation, n his political writings, Dostoevsky the arch nationalist takes over.

Religion so totally engulfs him that the writer ceases to objectively view eality. And it is here that all the latent views of the Orient emerge. ussia in the war against Turkey in 1877 is seen as a saviour of the Slav eople still under the yoke of Turkey. The war assumes the proportions of crusade. Dostoevsky becomes more and more intolerant of non-Christian eoples and nations. The decision by the Russian Government to forcibly vict the Crimean Tartars is fully approved by the writer, who fears that if ie Russians do not move in it will be the Jews.[18] (his antisemitic leanings re well known).

There is another paradox. A constant feeling of condescension is pparent when the writer speaks of liberating the Bulgarians and uniting ll the Slavs into one brotherhood. Dostoevsky imagines that "for the lavs . . . Russia is still the sun, the hope, their friend, mother, protectress nd their future liberator."[19] He sees Russia heading the Pan Slav iovement.

> The role for which Russia was destined from the time of Ivan III when he chose the . . . two headed eagle* as the coat-of-arms, was that of the leader of Orthodox Christianity—its guardian and protector.[20]

All the Slavs will be united "under the wings of Russia." Edward aid has very aptly pointed out that "nearly every nineteenth century riter was extraordinarily well aware of the fact of the empire."[21] lthough this quotation is applied to the French and English experience it just as relevant for the Russian writers. The feeling of supremacy wards smaller nations, the fight for more democratization and freedom home and its inapplicability to those nations seeking independence from ussian subjugation—these attitudes exist not just in Dostoevsky but his predecessors as well, like Pushkin and Lermontov.[22] The annexation licy of the czarist government is justified by these writers.

In 1881 after fierce resistance Turkmenia, along with the town of shkhabad, fell to the Russians. Dostoevsky enters into polemics with ose who are decrying the Government's Asiatic policy and feel that

*It is doubtful that Dostoevsky was aware of the fact that the symbol of the two-headed eagle used widely as the coat of arms of both European and Russian kings is an ancient Sumerian symbol. The Europeans adopted it from the Arabs at the time of the Crusades.

hose very funds should be utilised for the improvement of one's o
:conomy. The writer is jubilant at the success of the Russian expediti
n fact, Dostoevsky feels that Russia should have moved Eastwards mu
arlier, after the Napoleonic War. In the colonization of the East l
Russia's future, according to him.

> Let the conviction grow in the minds of these millions of peo|
> right up to India, in fact, even in India, of the white Cza
> invincibility and his unconquerable sword . . . These people mig
> have their own Khans and Emirs. England's power might astou
> them . . . but the white Czar must stand above the Khans, the emi
> the Indian Empress and even above that of the Caliph's. Let him
> the Caliph but the white Czar is the Czar to the Caliph as well. Th
> type of conviction must be ingrained in them ! And it is bei
> ingrained and growing with every passing year. This is necessary f
> us because it prepares them for the future.[23]

For the writer Russia's colonization of the Orient is seen as
ssion which carries civilization to those countries and "By capturi
sia our spirits and strength will lift . . . In Europe we were hangers c
hereas in Asia we will arrive as masters."[24]

There were moments when the writer seemed to understand objecti
realities[25] but they were far overshadowed by his religious fanaticism
chauvinistic nationalism and an unfounded hatred of the Orient. Withou
perhaps realising it Dostoevsky became the staunchest supporter of th
Russian government's expansionist policy of the Orient and, like man
before him, sniggered at the culture and civilizations of these nation
What a contrast this is to the stand taken by a contemporary of his, Le
Tolstoy ! In fact, Dostoevsky vehemently criticised the epilogue c
Anna Karenina in which Tolstoy ridicules and questions the zeal displaye
by volunteers of the Russo-Turkish War "to free the Slavs".

Tolstoy's search, similar in many ways to that of Dostoevsky's
about the meaning of life led him to a broader understanding of reality
The study of Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, the teachings of Confucius an
Lao Tse made him more tolerant towards other nations and peoples. I
Dostoevsky's political writings made him turn more and more nationalistic
those of Tolstoy opened his eyes to the common features inherent i
every despotic and oppressive regime. For Dostoevsky the czar was th
saviour, for Tolstoy he was "the Chingiz Khan with telegraphs, a
constitution, a press and political parties. This "Chingiz Khan along
with his well-mannered, courteous and clean murderers",[26] in the name
of Christianity, was engaged in plunder, wars and crimes which he was
justifying. Tolstoy realised that there was no difference between any of
the Russian czars, of Napoleon, Gladstone or Palmerston. "The forms of
oppression had changed but not disappeared". A despotic rule, its cruelty
was the same everywhere—be it in the torture of innocent Poles by Russian
soliders or that of Chingiz Khan.

— Countries and Governments carry out intrigues and wars because

of property : the shores of the Rheine, land in Africa, China and in the Balkan Peninsula.[27]

If Dostoevsky was urging the government to conquer Asia, Tolstoy was decrying the heinous crime being committed by the invasion of China in 1900 by eight countries (England, France, USA, Russia, Japan, Austro-Hungary, Germany, Italy.) Tolstoy's pain for the oppressed colonial nations and his sympathies with their struggle was not shared by Dostoevsky. And for this reason one can say that if Tolstoy was successful in overcoming the prevalent Orientalist approach of his times Dostoevsky turned a prey to "Oriental Phantoms".

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1. F.M. Dostoevskii, Dnevnik pisatelya za 1877 god, Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, Nauka, Leningrad, Vol. 25, pp. 122-123.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 412.
3. Edward W. Said, Orientalism, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1978, p. 25.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
6. Voltaire : "One Latin and one Greek priest informed that Mohammed II allowed the whole of Constantinopol to be ransacked, that he personally broke the image of Jesus Christ and converted all the churches into Mosques. In order to make the conqueror seem even more repulsive they added that the Sultan . . . beheaded his mistress and ordered the stomachs of fourteen of his pashas to be slit open in order to ascertain which one of them had eaten a water-melon. Hundreds of historians are repeating these pathetic untruths. Turn to the Turkish chronicles which merit trust . . . and you will see how ridiculous are all these fairy tales" In : F. Ya. Priima, Russkaya literatura na Zapade. Nauka, Lenin-grad, 1970, p. 27.
7. Philip K. Hitti quotes Arabic sources on the Crusades and their attack on Jerusalem in 1099. "The besiegers stormed the city and perpetrated an indiscriminate massacre involving all ages and both sexes. 'Heaps of heads and hands and feet were to be seen throughout the streets and squares of the city" (Agiles, p. 659) In the book : Philip K. Hitti. History of the Arabs. Macmillan, 1985. p. 639.
8. Edward W. Said. *op. cit.* p. 8.
9. V.G. Belinskii. Retsenzii i zametki, yanvar'—mart 1844. Nal'i Damayanti. Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, Akademii Nauk, Moscow 1955, vol. 8. p. 113.
10. *Ibid.* p. 113.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Dobrolyubov attempts an objective appraisal of the reasons for the 1157 revolt in India but because his thinking is conditioned along European lines and most of his source material is French, he falls a prey to oriental attitudes. "India has not changed since the time of Alexander . . ." (P. 9) He praises English enlightement and its effortes to ducate the masses who, by their very nature are "lazy." Indians are not ready for English humaneness nor for adopting Christianity etc. In : N.A. Dobrolyubov. Vzglyad na istoriyu i sovremennoe sostoyanie ost-Indii. Sobranie sochinenii. Khudozhestvennaya literatura. Moscow, 1962, vol. 2. This concept of the lazy Oriental is once again repeated in Dobrolyubov's article. Zhizn' Magometa. Ibid.

13. F.M. Dostoevskii, Dvoinik, *op. cit.* vol. 1 p. 135.
14. *Ibid* p. 158.
15. Na Evropeiskie sobytiya v 1854 godu. *Ibid.* vol. 2. p. 405.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Zapiski iz mertvogo doma. *Ibid* vol. 4, p. 216.
18. Dnevnik pisatelya za 1876 god. *Ibid.* vol. 23. p. 54-55.
19. *Ibid.* p. 115.
20. *Ibid.* p. 49.
21. Edward W. Said. *op. cit.* p. 14.
22. Pushkin opposed the Polish revolt of 1831 in his poem. *Reply to the Slanderers of Russia* (Klevetnikam Rossii). *Anniversary of Borodino. and in his letters* of 1830-31. Lermontov, in his poem *Mtsyry*, while glorifying the freedom loving Georgians, simultaneously adds that the Russian take over of Georgia was God sent. See also his poems Opyat' narodnye vitji.
23. F. Dostoevskii, Dnevnik pisatelya za 1881 god. op. cit vol. 27 pp. 32-33
24. Ibid p. 36.
25. Dost evsky sees the "Eastern question" as a game between nations-five wolves on their haunches each ready to pounce on the bone of connection, Constantinopol. (Dnevnik pisatelya za 1876 god.) In 1854 the writer had wholeheartedly agreed, as he himself admits, with Granovsky's article on the Russo-Turkish War of 1855. Granovsky had pointed out that Russia's politics towards the Slav nations had been one of capture and subjugation. In 1876 Dostoevsky refutes these charges and feels that Russia's aims are fair. Dnevnik pisatelya za 1876 god.
26. L.N. Tolstoi. Pora ponyat'. . . In . Sobranie sochinenii. v. 20 tomakh. Khudozhestvennaya literatura, Moscow. 1964. vol. 16, p. 569.
27. L.N. Tolstoi. Rabstvo nashego vremeni. vol. 16. p. 399.

*SIBEL BOZDOGAN**

Orientalism And Architectural Culture

WHEN A PROMINENT Turkish architect wholeheartedly declared that "...he too, has started making domes and arches"[1] he was only expressing what can perhaps be seen as the "Islamic Revival" of the last decade in architectural culture at large. The Western architectural world—its media, publications and exhibitions—is visibly permeated by an Islamic discourse, particulary heightened after the inception of the Aga Khan Awards Programme and the publication of *Mimar* in the early 1980s.

This renewed interest in Islamic architecture demands cautious evaluation since it has a two sided implication. On one hand, it represents an unprecedented platform of discussion for a *non-Western transition to modernity*. By encouraging research and theorizing, it marks the posibility of *authentic* theory for cultures 'peripheral' to the Western world.[2] This possibility operates within a *history/modernity problematique*. It perceives modernity not as a Western category, but as a more or less universal set of problems to which there can be different, authentic responses, dislocated in time and place.

On the other hand, the interest in Islamic architecture also represents the possibility of further imagery at the disposal of an architectural culture of pluralism and consumerism—an imagery which is particularly marketable for rich Islamic clients. This possibility operates within an *East/West problematique* representing the East at the level of imagery. The products often end up as western 'commodities' with Eastern 'wrapping' to be sold to the East. (I have to note that I am using "East" and "West" in quotation marks because it is precisely these words that I would like to question as discursive categories).

Here, I primarily wish to expose the cultural roots and background of the second attitude which I connect to the phenomenon of Orientalism. The term came to be widely used particularly after Edward Said's seminal work *Orientalism*, 1978. The book is a major intellectual contribution rigorously posing the problems of the East/West problematique, in fact, of any form of polarity thinking which, in many cases, obscures the actual complexity of the picture. It is therefore appropriate to first outline the main arguments of the book and look historically at the scope and status of the

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"orient" for the Western world. The second part, will then focus up on specific Orientalist undercurrents in architectural culture, from the Enlightenment onwards to its current implications for the "post-modern condition".

Orientalism As A Form Of Discourse

It is interesting to note how "the East and the West" have acquired many different and not always overlapping connotations based on geographical, cultural, religious or political definitions.

Raymonds Williams, in his *Keywords*, traces the East/West distinction to the division of the Roman Empire in the 4th century, after which the division between the Western Church (i.e catholic) and the Eastern (i.e. orthodox) has become sharper. In the 16th and the 17th centuries, with the development of systematic geography in Europe, the West becomes the Christian Greco-Roman world in contrast to an East or "Orient" covering the lands from the Mediterranean to India and China. From this period onwards, even the terms 'near', 'middle' and 'far' East bear testimony to the prevailing Europe-centered perspective.

The transition from the Middle Ages to Modernity—the succession of Renaissance, Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment—has decisively installed Western self-confidence, based on the "decline versus progress" thesis: i. e. the view that European civilization represented the historical category of progress, vis a vis other cultures long past their golden ages and now in a state of stagnation and decline. Equipped with such philosophical legitimation, Europe could then proceed with her enterprise to study, represent, restructure and ultimately intervene with what was beyond herself. The West versus the Rest, i.e. Europe versus all of Asia, Africa, Far East and the Americas came to be the dominant mental framework, within which however, the specific status of Islam demands attention. That the word Orient is often taken to be synonymous with the Islamic Orient needs to be historically and culturally explained. In his essay, "Islam and the Philosophers of History"[3], Albert Hourani exposes how Islam has always been "a major fact of European history", geographically adjacent to it and always presenting a challenge whether philosophical, military or political. In fact, Orientalism as a branch of research and study is frequently explained in connection to this challenge: as a desire to be familiar with the threatening element. Edward Said says: ".. the same is true of the methods of contemporary learned Orientalists whose subject is not so much the East itself, as the East made known and therefore less fearsome to the Western reading public."[4] And it was again this challenge which, in the Middle Ages, prompted Western scholars and monks to study Islam, to translate texts from Arabic etc. (such as, for instance, the case of Peter the Venerable, the abbot of Cluny, who initiated

the Study of Koran in Medieval Europe).

What is important for the case of the Middle Ages is, as Hourani discusses in detail, the *philosophical and theological* nature of the challenge that Islam presented to the Western mind preoccupied with such questions: How could the victory and the territorial expansion of Islam be explained if Christianity was the true revelation ? How could a heretical faith acquire such power ? How should the Christians interpret this in the Providential order of the world ? This, not surprisingly, is the most lively period of Islamic philosophy and science, with the names of Averroes and Avicenna particularly prominent in the Western world. From the time of Reformation onwards, there is a decisive turning point, with the challenge shifting from the philosophical/theological realm into the *military*:

"The claim and doctrines of Islam were no longer a threat to the Christian faith now that the faith had come to terms with Greek philosophy and created intellectual defences. Islam was no longer a heresy which was likely to win supporters, nor an intellectual attack against which serious defence was necessary. Christians might be frightened of the Ottomen army, but they could look at the religion whose banner it carried with cool detachment if not with contempt."[5]

Islam was no longer the work of devil, but a historical phenomenon the causes and nature of which could be rationally discussed. In other words, with Islam brought down to earth and reconstructed as an object of cool and detached study, the grounds for Orientalism, in the sense that Said defines it, were set.

As a final note to this West versus Islam problematique, I would like to mark that the West versus the Turks is a relevant subset of Orientalism, precisely because of what Hourani said, i.e. the Turks representing the *militant* Islam on the borders of Europe, particularly in the aftermath of two events : the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, and the siege of Vienna in the 16th and 17th centuries. How the *image* of the Turk has become a part of European culture is a topic in its own right, extending from Martin Luther's views about the Turks (as a punishment sent by Providence to the corruption of the Christain world) to various "Turkish fashions" (epitomized by Motzart's "Abduction from the Seraglio" in 1787).

After this brief discussion of the scope and status of the Orient for the West, we can look at the way Edward Said poses the difficult question of *cross-cultural representation*, i.e. how a culture is perceived, described and ultimately reconstructed by another, often gravely reducing, schematizing and distorting "the image" according to the predilections of "the beholder". The book argues that Orientalism is not merely a specific area of research and scholarship installed in Western academia in the 19th century, but a broader concept : a form of discourse whereby the East is "reconstructed" verbally and visually, in the texts and imagery of Western

travellers, scholars, poets, ambassadors, merchants and adventurers. The Orient is almost a European invention", says Said, "...a place of romance exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" Himself being a professor of comparative literature Said particularly concentrates on the texts of Flaubert, Chateaubriand, Lane ("Modern Egyptians"), Nerval ("Voyage on Orient"), Silvestre de Sacy and Ernst Renan. Without going into the details of his material, I would like to outline the major points in Said's argument.

Explicitly acknowledging his intellectual indebtedness to Michael Foucault, Said borrows the latter's notion of *discourse* as well as the *Same/Other* distinction underlying so many Western institutions. That is, he explains how Orientalism, as a form of discourse, emerges with the creation of an image of the Orient *in contrast* to the self-image of the West. The distinction is constituted as a set of opposing concept pairs : the West is rational, the East irrational and emotional ; the West is dynamic, the East static etc. "The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe ; it is also the place of Europe's greatest, richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. The Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience."[6]

Indeed the distinction between the Same and the Other has been the major tool of the Orientalists in describing or representing the places or cultures they observe. In a way, describing the Orient becomes an implicit self-affirmation, an occasion to feel pride in Western achievements vis a vis cultures lacking these. The following quotation from a French traveller in the 17th century would illlustrate the point.

> The turks are *opposite to us in almost all respects* : and this opposition appears in nothing more plainly than in their obstinate adhering to their ancient customs. In our country we are never at rest till we have invented some new Fashion ; and Beauty itself would hardly please us without the charms of Novelty. Hence the Turks accuse the Franks of Fickleness and Inconstancy and boast of their own strength of mind that fixes steadily on solid Enjoyments, without deigning to take notice of Trifles . . . I found that what they call Strength of Mind, Constancy or Solidity is, at the bottom, nothing else but a pure insensibility and a weakness that is altogether inexcusable in any reasonable creature . . . they are so far from *studying to improve their Understandings* that in a manner they profess and glory in their Ignorance ; and that their curiosity is confin'd within so narrow a compass that they never undertake a Voyage without some covetous or sordid Design. Besides their Indifference and Unconcern'dness for the Publick interest ; the almost Monastical solitariness of their Life and the Laziness of their Temper . . . (my underlines)[7]

So the first important point is that there is an Orient because ther an Occident in need of the image of the Other. In Said's words : "Orier lism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemologi distinction made between the Orient and the Occident."[8]

In connection to this, Said also refers to Vico (in whose "veru factum" principle "truth is man-made"). Similarly, the Orient is, i way, "man-made". It exists as an "ideal-type" insofar as it is recreat reconstructed and thus made known. This, he describes, as "Orientaliz the Orient" and explains how, for Europe, the Orient was always sor thing more than what was empirically known about it. Through wl Said calls "imaginative geography and its representations", stories, myt images and beliefs are constructed around the word Orient (like you Marco Polo and his friends in Venice listening to fantastic stories ab the East). The Orient thus acquires certain immediate connotations : instance a hidden sexuality where anything may be possible, in contrast a Victorian morality in Europe where all aspects of life including sex highly codified and institutionalized. Said exposes how women and sex tity is a recurrent theme in Orientalist literature, from the most schola works to popular novels for Western consumption. The same theme co titutes the subject matter for many Orientalist painters, such as in t famous Turkish Bath scenes of Ingres, or the exotic and enigmatic sex connotations of Jean Gerome's "Snake Charmer" (which, incidentaly, I become the cover for Said's book). In many of the well-known Orien list paintings (by Jean Gerome, Ernst Rudolph, Ludwig Deutsch, Jo Fredrick Lewis etc.) this "imaginative reconstruction" of subject mat is depicted in a remarkable accuracy of detail and realistic representation of tiles, calligraphy, carpet patterns, clothes etc. As Linda Nochlin argu in an article[9] this realism in representation is adopted as a tool to le legitimacy to an underlying discursive restructuring of the Orient. Th the most fantastic themes, such as the slave market, the call to prayer, t women in harem, violent scenes etc., are depicted in a striking photogr phic accuracy.

Then there is the *political question* constituting Said's fundament preoccupation underlying his work. He makes reference once more Foucault (the concept of power), to Gramsci (the concept of hegemon and to Raymond Williams (the concept of culture) and discusses ho hegemonic systems like culture are productive rather than inhibiting up writers and thinkers, accounting for the consequent cultural richness ar accumulated knowledge :

"... Within the umbrella of Western hegemony over the Orie during the period from the end of the 18th century, there emerged a cor plex Orient suitable for study in the academy, for display in the museur for reconstruction in the colonial office, for theoretical illustration anthropological, biological, linguistic, racial and historical theses abo mankind and the universe, for instances of economic and sociologic

theories of development, revolution, cultural personality, national or religious character."[10]

In other words, Said challenges the general liberal consensus that "true" knowledge is fundamentally non-political. He argues how knowledge of the Orient, in all its truth and scholarliness, was the basis of Western power over it. Within the context of 19th century colonialism, this issue of *power* becomes more transparent, summarized in Benjamin Disraeli's words : "The East is a career". As Said remarks, the Orient acquires a new significance with colonialism : no longer as an object over which a single Europe contemplates, but as one over which many European powers confront each other :

"What we must reckon with is a long and slow process of appropriation by which Europe, or the European awareness of the Orient, transformed itself from being textual and contemplative into being administrative, economic and even military . . . The cumulative effect of decades of so sovereign a Western handling turned the Orient from alien into colonial space. What was important in the latter 19th century was not whether the West had penetrated and possessed the Orient, but rather how the British and the French felt that they had done it."[11]

At this point, Said looks at the differences and the similarities of French and British attitudes in colonialism. Although it is not possible to reduce these attitudes to stereotypes, it is nonetheless legitimate to observe that the British, in general, were always physically present in the Orient as administrators and governors, while the French constituted more a cultural influence penetrating into the colonized through language, manners, mode of thought, literature etc.

The major ambiguity running unresolved throughout Said's book is that, often he seems to suggest that Orientalism, as a form of discourse, distorts reality and constructs an imaginary Orient. Yet, in stating his premises and acknowledging Foucault as his intellectual source, he denies, the existence of a "real Orient". Also when Said emphasizes Orientalism as a form of discourse speaking for a "mute Orient" which cannot speak for itself, his implications become questionable. He not only suggests a "real" Orient distorted due to its incapacity to express itself, but also implies the idea that *only* the Orient should speak for itself. (Whereas in many cases, when the Orient does speak for itself, it speaks with a Western voice). Here we spot Said's main divergence from Foucault : in the way the latter understands it, *structures of thought* are above individuals whether we (or Said) like it or not. Discursive categories are not produced by authors or by a group of authors arranged around a tradition and discourse analysis is interested not in what authors have to say or feel as subjects, but is concerned with statements as related to other statements in the field. Also different from Foucault is the essentially *humanist* standpoint from which Said produces his "oppositional analysis". He is critical of Orientalism for its construction of static images rather than historical

or personal narratives. He says, Orientalism, as a powerful discourse replaces human experience with a textual attitude, i.e. "prefers schemati authority of a text to the disorientations of direct encounters witl humans."[12] Thus he is explicitly involved with his subject : he appear to "write back" in a way, from the position of an Oriental whose reality i distorted and misrepresented. As a humanist, he is critical of the polariza tion stemming from the East/West distinction :

"When one uses categories like Oriental and Western as both th starting and the end points of analysis, research, public policy, the resul is usually to polarize the distinction—the Oriental becomes more Oriental the Westerner more Western—and limit the human encounter betweer different cultures, traditions and societies."[13]

In other words, while extensively borrowing from Foucault in viewin Orientalism as a form of *discourse* and as knowledge for *power*, Saic refuses to remain detached and powerless vis a vis structures of thought or discursive formations. He is committed to his role of "engaged critic of culture" and advocates a "situated and responsible adversary position."[14]

The strongest aspect of Said's "adversary position", I believe, is the fact that he does not counterpose a defensive, oppositional discourse, this time defining itself in opposition to the Orientalist discourse. Against false stereotypes of Orientalism, he refuses to cling to an authentic and especially traditional Oriental reality. This I find very important because it is the basis upon which I would like to criticize some recent views pertaining to Islamic culture and architecture. To cite just one example, in a paper to the Aga Khan Awards Conference in 1978, Iranian scholar Sayyed Hossein Nasr laments the disasterous consequences of Westernization and says that the ugliness of the modern environments of the Islamic world is ". . . in stark contrast with the serenity and beauty of the traditional Islamic city . . . Fortunately, traditional Islamic architecture is still alive in the villages and smaller towns of many Islamic countries and secret documents are still preserved in some of the guilds."[15] Such nostalgic glorification of an idealized Islamic past operates within the same East/West problematique established by the Orientalist tradition. Unable to cope with the problem of modernity, it ultimately glorifies the Orient as a static stereotype. In this respect, Said's position is indeed examplary, and as acknowledged by his reviewers, "his main concern is not with what was, or even what is, but with what is becoming. Although of this latter process he tells us very little, the fundamental question is posed : on what basis may human groups accurately (and we may also add morally) be distinguished ?"[16]

In other words, his enterprise to tackle with the difficult problem of *cultural boundaries* is the greatest contribution of the book. And the way he does it, i.e. from the position of a *universal intellectual* borrowing extensively from Western intellectual sources and literary techniques, is his merit detaching him from the biases of a particular place. It is in

this "homelessness" that the definition of the intellectual resides :

"Intellectuals may be at home almost anywhere. Or they may be homeless anywhere, feeling an alienation from all particularistic, history-bound places and feeling separated from an everyday life unintelligible except to those sharing the same tacit background assumptions."[17]

Said's position suggests, at least to me, possible modes of dealing with cultural issues from the standpoint of universal intellectual, emphasizing more what is shared than what separates. This, I believe, is a much needed position in the discussions of Islamic culture and architecture.

Orientalism in Architectural Culture

At the risk of oversimplifying it is possible to view Western attitudes to the Orient as a gradual transition from a spirit of curiosity and inquiry (Enlightenment culture) into fascination and nostalgia on one hand (Romantic culture) and into intervention and exploitation on the other (Colonial culture). How these attitudes manifest themselves in the artistic and architectural culture of the Western world is an immense topic in its own right. Here I merely intend to give a synoptic exposition of main currents and prominent names in order to both substantiate some of the issues posed by Edward Said, and to connect the discussion to current debates concerning Islamic architecture.

Through the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries, parallel to the ventures of Western travellers, artists and statemen in Asia and the Middle East, Oriental architecture is discovered, studied and depicted by the Western world. That the interest in Oriental architecture is, at first, permeated by a fascination with the fantastia and the exotic, is examplified by the visions of Fischer von Erlach (who has attempted, in the first half of the 18th century, to compile a history of world architecture with all styles and cultures represented); and Jean Jacques Lequeu (who, in espousing a particular brand of " architecture parlante", attempted to depict a Chinese, Indian, Egyptian and Turkish architecture). But what really prepares the accumulation of an immense stock of information in the Western world, is the engravings and illustrated travel accounts of the early 19th century —some of the most well known names being Richard Pococke, William Hodges, Stuart and Revett, Thomas and William Daniell Thomas Allom and William Bartlett. Depicting scenes of India, Persia, Egypt, Syria and Turkey in particular, these illustrations—perspectives and bird's eye views—are invaluable as early documents, particularly for cultures whose only form of representation has long been flat, two-dimensional miniatures. It is curious to note that in many of these engravings the buildings or the town are depicted inside foliage and ruins of earlier structures (in the fashion of Piranesi) with people, camels, dogs etc. in the foreground

illustrating the 19th century "love of ruins" and of "the remote" both ir time and geography—all at the core of the Western Romantic Movement.

Then comes the proliferation of measured drawings and architectura studies which, from then on, constitute the foundation of various Orienta and Islamic revivals in architecture, serving as models for any architec who builds in these "styles". There are such drawings and studies o Pascal Coste, Francis Arundale and Joseph Bononi (the first Westerners tc measure and draw the Dome of the Rock), Owen Jones and Jules Goury (with their elaborate drawings of the Alhambra in Spain) Charles Cockrell Charles Barry and William Chambers (with his drawings of Chinese designs) That these works have a certain precision, method and scientific orienta tion is significant preparing the grounds for a "reproduction" of these architectures in the Western world, in the form of influential publications and more significantly, as actual buildings modelled after these authentic examples. If so far, Oriental/Islamic architecture was *discovered and deli neated*, it was now the period of Oriental/Islamic architecture *appropriatec and displayed* in the Western world Within the context of the prevailing "battle of styles" and the eclecticism of the 19th century culture, Oriental Islamic architecture constituted just another *style* at the architect's dispo sal, just another set of forms and ornamental repertoire to select from in a matter of taste and fashion. Not only Chinoisies, Turqueries, Pagodas and Oriental Pavillions proliferated in Europe, but also through internationa fairs and colonial expositions from the latter part of the 19th century onwards, the architectures of these remote cultures were literally transpor ted to European soil for the consumption of the Western public. In these international fairs and expositions, Oriental cultures appear as an exotic flavor to these events which, otherwise, constitute a platform of confronta tion among industrialized powers. The stage set buildings, the silks embroidery, crafts etc. of the Orient are for display in front of the Western public, no longer as proud testimonies of a distant but powerfu and challenging culture (as had been the case for instance, when in the middle ages, gifts were sent to Charlemagne's court from Baghdad), bu as a spectacle reinforcing the differentness and superiority of an industria lized West—whose very superiority is capable of appropriating the flavor of the Orient for the enjoyment of her public.

A telling episode is the visit of the Ottoman Sultan Abdulaziz tc Paris on the occasion of 1867 International Exposition. (The Ottoman Empire participated in the Exposition as an exotic flavor. Her pavillions designed by French architects, were replicas of the Green Mosque of Bursa and of a Bosphorous mansion, reconstructed on the Expositior grounds between the Eiffel Tower and Ecole Militaire). The Sultan was taken to museums, operas and palaces, turning into a "student of civilization" in front of a curious public who wanted to see, with their own eyes, the symbol of Eastern power that had challenged, frightened but also fascinated Europe for long years. An editorial in *La Presse* on

the occasion of Sultan's visit gave an account of the by-gone Eastern supremacy and concluded with the final message: ". . .what enormous change does today represent. The attention of the whole world is upon old, Christian Europe. Europe is now the centre and the supporting point of the world. We are the East ! We are the light !"

In other words, the contact between the East and the West was not really a matter of reciprocity. While Western presence in the East appropriated the latter in the form of descriptions, illustrations and knowledge, the occasional Eastern presence in the West was a passive one, itself to be appropriated and turned into a spectacle. This one-sidedness of the discourse,i.e. the nonexistence of a comparable "Occidentalism" is another interesting point reinforcing Said's emphasis on the notion of power. For the West, projects of domination have acted as a precondition for curiosity and the search for knowledge. Whereas the East's attitude to the West was either one of indifference and ignorance or of child-like fascination and admiration, with little, if at all any, awareness of the economic, social, political and technological foundations of the achievements of the West. At occasional instances of contact, this often unfolded as a difficulty in describing and depicting the West, to which we can also add the prohibition of visul representation in Islam The absence of a particular project (political, economic etc.) makes the Oriental's vision of the West, a very unsystematic, often aimless collection of observations and impressions—as examplified for instance, by the memories of Celebi Mehmet Efendi sent by the Ottoman Empire to Paris in 1720-21 for a temporary mission. That the Ottoman Empire was about two hundered years behind in realising the need to install her own permanent embassies in Western capitals, is another manifestation of this indifference.

Finally, not only was Oriental architecture brought to the West, but also it was capitalized upon by the Westerners, in the form of colonial architecture. In many cases, colonial architecture was based on Western architectural traditions, methods and types, "dressed up" in local motifs and decorative element, often in a completely different context than the traditional norms For instance, motifs traditionally used in private interiors, were blown up in scale and applied to monumental facades on public streets.[18] And Said's notion of "knowledge of the Orient for power" again underlies many of the architectural enterprises of colonialism. French colonial architecture in Morocco, for instance, was part of France's "visible politics" in North Africa between 1830-1930, with all the systematic research by colonial architects to build up a specific colonial architecture and to legitimize its stylistic foundations. I would like to draw attention to a very common misconception that colonial architecture contains an intentional ideological project to seduce and subjugate the local population. Here Althusser's notion of ideology, as something structurally more complex than direct ruling class intentionality is useful. Ideology as something operating, in a way, behind the back of individual

actors, is also relevant for the case of colonial architecture. In many cases, the colonial architect operates with a genuine belief in the appropriateness of his work for its specific geographical and cultural location.

With a major chronological jump, I would now like to conclude with some remarks on the current debates pertaining to Islamic architecture. Said's exposition of the East/West distinction as a form of discourse historically reproduced by institutions and by relations of power, reveals how the idea of Islamic architecture frequently shares the same Orientalist paradigm, i e. the distinction between the Same and the Other. The implications of accepting this distinction are far more serious than would at first appear. The extension of this distinction into *culture/civilization* distinction, leads to the conclusion that culture is local, national, Oriental, Islamic, whatever while civilization is equivalent to Western technology. (This, incidentally, constitutes the essence of the "dual model" in Turkish culture at the turn of the century, resulting in the so called First National Architecture Movement). This attitude can be read into the current Orientalism of some Western practices and corporate architecture in the oil rich Middle East. Islamic motifis have become a marketable commodity ending up in bizarre and unprecedented products-like a mosque placed on top of a skyscraper, on wallpaper with Islamic calligraphy and geometric patterns or it. (My arguement is not against the wallpaper but against the myth that it is Islamic while wallpaper with, say, flower patterns is not. Whereas the issue is not the pattern, but the wallpaper itself).

Theoretically speaking, appropriation of Islamic architecture (or learning from it) may be in one or more of the three modes: ornamental/iconographical, formal/typological and craft/technical. Connecting back to my introductory statements, I merely intend to imply the potential of the latter two within a tradition/modernity problematique, and to warn against the likeliness of the former to be exploited within an East/West problematique. Given the nature of our "post-modern culture", what frequently ends up being the case is a reproduction of the myth of Islamic architecture, in an up-to-date version of "orientalizing the orient".

This is where the importance of the Aga Khan Awards for Architecture starts. The Awards, in general, have the merit (very much like Said) of trying to avoid the mental structure of Orientalism, and to question cultural boundaries in all its difficulty and complexity. Making explicit reference to Said's book, Brian Taylor gives credit to the AKA:

> "The mechanism of the award, by encouraging an appreciation of indigeneous traditional architectures as well as attempts to adapt modern technological means to evolving traditional needs, will aid Muslims (and non-Muslims it is hoped) in understanding the degrees of past cultural dependence upon the West in the realm of architecture and city planning. Only with such knowledge of the intricate cross cultural relationships of dominance and subservience, whether

by political or purely economic means, will developing Islaimc societies assert their own authentic, independent cultural values in building."[19]

I am not able to go into the details of various positions within the AKA programme or evaluate its choices. But I would like to say that, in spite of occasional orthodox Islamic views using it as a platform, the programme, in general, avoids being trapped in the mental structure of Orientalism. In searching for ways of resolving the tradition/modernity, culture/civilization tensions, there is a promising awareness of the elements of *universality* as exposed by Paul Ricoeur in "Universal Civilization and National Cultures" to which Kenneth Frampton often refers as the intellectual source of his critical regionalism. Positions like that of Nasr, whom I mentioned earlier, are (and should be) critically questioned on the AKA platform. Islamic radicalism should not be allowed to obscure the positive side of modernity, i.e. the unprecedented possibility of freedom from want and massive access to comfort. Paul Ricoeur reminds us :

"Only a faith which values time and change and puts man in the position of a master before the world, history and his own life, seems fit to survive and endure. Otherwise, its fidelity to the past will be nothing more than a simple folkloric ornamentation. The problem is not simply to repeat the past, but rather to take root in it in order to ceaselessly invent."[20]

With Ricouer I would like to mark the need for *authentic modernity* which can only be achieved by breaking the boundaries of Orientalist stereotypes and dissolving the East/West distinction as absolute categories. That is on one side, it is important to demystify the illusion that European culture wa in fact, and by right, a universal culture; and on the other, to avoid a retreat to the idea of a traditional East just for the sake of opposing this illusion. As Fernand Braudel also argues, it is not true that individual civilizations are threatened by the uniforming effects of modernity :

"We would have to be blind not to feel this massive transformation of the world; but it is not a transformation which is taking place everywhere, and where it is taking place, it is in the forms and with a human dimension and resonance which are rarely ever the same. The triumph of *civilization* in the singular, does not spell disaster for *civilizations* in the plural."[21]

I would like to conclude on the same vein, with Ricoeur again who says : "The human condition is such that different contexts of civilization are possible."[22]

1. Sevki Vanli in the symposium, "Modern Architecture and Beyond in Turkey", Marmara Adasi, August 1984 (published in *Mimarlik*, 84/11-12)
2. Not geographically peripheral, but peripheral in the sense of I. Wallerstein's "Modern World System" (New York : Academic Press, 1974).
3. Albert Hourani.
4. Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York : Vintage Press, 1979, p. 60.

5. Albert Hourani, *op. cit.*, p. 213.
6. Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York, Vintage Press, 1979, p. 1.
7. DuMont, *A New Voyage to The Levent*, London, 1696.
8. Edward Said, *op. cit.*, p. 2
9. Linda Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient", *Art In America*, May 1983, p. 120.
10. Edward Said, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
11. Edward Said, *op. cit.* p. 210-211.
12. Edward Said. *op. cit.* p. 93.
13. Edward Said, *op. cit.* p 45.
14. See Edward Said, "The Problem of Textuality", *Critical Inquiry*, Summer' 78.
15. Sayyed Hossein Nasr
16. James Clifford, "Review of Said's Orientalism", *History and Theory* v. 19, 1980 p. 221.
17. Alvin Gouldner, "Prologue to A Theory of Revolutionary Intellectuals" TELOS 26. Winter 1975 76, p. 20.
18. Brian Bruce Taylor, "Rethinking Colonial Architecture", *Mimar* 13.
19 Brian Bruce Taylor, "On the AKAA Programme", supplement to *Domus* December, 1980
20. Paul Ricoeur, "Universal Civilization and National Cultures" in *History and Truth*, p. 282.
21. Fernand Braudel, *On History*, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1983, p 213.
22. Paul Ricoeur, *op. cit.* p. 280.

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Bernard, "The Question of Orientalism" *The New York Review*, June 24, 1982.

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Lata and Ruth, "The Challenge of Orientalism", *Economy and Society*, v. 14, n. 2, May 1985.

Note

Coconut Economy of Kerala

COCONUT cultivation occupies an important place in Kerala. It is the second most important crop, next only to paddy, occupying about 24 per cent of the gross cropped area as in 1977-78.

Coconut in Kerala accounts for about 68 per cent of the area under coconut in India and its share in all-India production is about 66 per cent.[1]

In 1973-74 coconut compared to other crops contributed the highest share of 17 per cent to the state's income.[2] It provides employment to about 16 per cent of the work force in Kerala. Coconut also accounts for a third of the value of agricultural production in Kerala. Coconut is also the raw material for a number of important industries like coir and coconut oil. Thus it is right to say that coconut economy is the backbone of the Kerala economy.

According to the Directorate of Coconut Development and Trade, the annual consumption of coconut among the high and middle income groups was 430 nuts per household every year and among the lower income families it was 150 nuts per household per year on an average.[4] Assuming that in 1976 roughly 7.5 lakh households belonged to the first category and 27.5 lakh households belonged to the second category in Kerala, the annual household consumption would work out to 735 million nuts in 1976. Coconut is also used for religious purposes and some are plucked as tender nuts. Taking into amount the above two purposes for which coconut is used and the 5 million used as seeds, total use of coconut for all these purposes would be 800 million nuts in the state.[5]

The consumption study conducted by the Coconut Directorate concluded that middle and high income groups consumed 29 kilograms of coconut oil per household every year.[6] In 1976 such households numbered 7.5 lakhs ; lower income groups which consumed 15 kilograms of coconut oil annually per household numbered about 27.5 lakhs households in 1976. Thus we get the total consumption by households in 1976 as 63,000 tonnes. The industrial consumption in the state is 2000 tonnes. Hotels consume another 1000 tonnes per annum.

Market Structure

Trade in coconut is monopsonistic in nature, with a large number of cultivators to sell their produce and only a few village merchants and wholesale merchants acting as the agents of the millers. This monopsony in trade is a reason why the coconut cultivator is not able to get a better price for his produce.

About 3/4th of the nuts produced in Kerala are disposed of in the form of nuts itself by the cultivator after retaining 15 per cent for their own consumption.

Out of the total copra of 2.95 lakh tonnes produced in Kerala only 50 per cent is used for crushing in the local milling industry and the balance is marketed to Maharashtra. The copra crushed in Kerala yields about 96,000 tonnes of coconut oil annually out of which about 30,000 tonnes of coconut oil move out of Kerala to other states, mainly to Maharashtra ; and about 150 million nuts have been moving out of Kerala.

On analysing the data we see that 1/3rd of the coconut oil, half of the copra and a good amount of coconuts move out of Kerala annually to Maharashtra. Through wholesale dealers these finally find their way to a few monopolists such a Hindustan Lever and Tata. It is these monopolists who finally determine the price of copra and coconut oil. In turn the price of copra and coconut oil affect the prices of coconut.

Table I

Area under coconut through the Plans

Plans	Percentage change in area
First	9.28
Second	8.93
Third	16.14
Annual	12.55
Fourth	5.23
Fifth	−9.98
Annual	0.46

Note : Base years are the first year of each plan period.

Source : Compiled from Report on the Marketing of Coconut in India, Agricultural Marketing Advisor, Directorate of Marketing and Inspection ; Agricultural Statistics in Kerala, 1975, Bureau of Economics and Statistics : Statistics for Planning 1977 and Statistics for Planning 1980, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Kerala.

From Table I it is clear that area under coconut kept increasing at fast rates till the Annual Plans 1966-69. Since then it increased at a lower rate especially during the fourth plan and registered a negative growth during the fifth plan and was stagnant during the annual plans between 1978-80.

Though there was the depressing effect of the decline in productivity since 1955-56 which may have influenced the farmers, area under coconut grew, perhaps due to the following reasons, namely, (1) coconut was a crop which provided greater income compared to most other crops, (2) land reforms had increased the number of small operators for whom coconut was important in meeting their cash needs, (3) coconut labourers were not as militant as labourers in paddy cultivation.

The causes for the decline in area since the fifth plan may be the following : (1) the incidence of root-wilt was intensifying and spreading, making many farms less remunerative, (2) crops such as rubber were proving to be more remunerative, and (3) coconut is a crop under the purview of the land reforms act and to avoid land reforms, big farmers converted their coconut gardens to other plantation crops such as rubber.

A study of the variation of area under coconut in various districts between 1957 and 1980-81 as shown in Table II shows that the biggest increase came in the case of Palghat and the only decrease in area came in Alleppey. For the two new districts of Idukki and Malappuram there was decline in coconut area between 1973-74 and 1980-81. Area in Alleppey declined due to reduction in gross area sown ; there was a reduction in the number of trees which were cut due to conversion of coconut area into other crops, especially plantation crops. Malappuram also showed a similar trend as in Alleppey.

The adverse impact of the root-wilt which is a disease affecting coconut palms, is more keenly felt by the small and marginal farmers who predominate among the coconut cultivators in the state. This is because the small and marginal farmers who live on the edge of the poverty line experience a shortfall in production due to root-wilt. None of the measures taken by the government has benefited the root-wilt affected small coconut farmer substantially so as to save him from ruin. The small farmer still continues cultivation but to support his family, he has to supplement income from coconut with income from non-farming sources. The incidence and spread of the root-wilt is thus causing considerable strain to the coconut cultivator of Kerala.

In the state about 15 to 20 per cent of the total number of palms are estimated to be root-wilt diseased

Table II

Area under Coconut in various districts of Kerala in 1957-58,1973-74 and 1980-81

(in '000 ha.)

District	1957-58	1973-74	1980-81	Percentage variation
Trivandrum	55.93		73.77	31.90
Quilon	56.22		81.77	45.45
Alleppey	68.24		63.11	—7.52
Kottayam	22.92		50.12	123.04
Idukki		23.04	16.61	—27.86
Ernakulam	30.58		60.88	99.08
Trichur	33.09		54.03	63.28
Palghat	2.81		22.95	716.73
Malappuram		69.38	59.68	—13.98
Kozhikode	50.77		94.47	86.07
Cannanore	45.52		72.98	60.33

Note : Since between 1957-58 and 1980-81 the districts of Kerala were re-organised certain changes have been made as follows. As Idukki was part of Kottayam, the 1957-58 figure for Kottayam has been reduced by 3/5th and similarly that for Ernakulrm has been reduced by 1/4th. Similarly Malappuram was a part of Palghat and Kozhikode and therefore their area has been reduced by 2/5th and 1/2 respectively. These changes have been made to facilitate comparison.

Source : Agricultural Statistics in Kerala, 1975, Bureau of Economics and Statistics ; Statistics for Planning, 1977, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Kerala.

An analysis of area under principal crops between 1952-53 and 1981-82 shows that the area under coconut increased by 51.69 per cent while some crops such as coffee, rubber and cashewnut increased by more than 300 per cent. This comparison of rates of growth of rubber, coffee and cashewnut, as opposed to coconut, shows how the former are replacing coconut as more lucrative crops. This also stands as evidence for the contention that coconut is being replaced by plantation crops.

Production Trends

From Table III we find that production of coconut began declining since the fourth plan. In fact the decline started during 1972-73 or the

fourth year of the fourth plan and this decline intensified during the fifth plan. This was due to the fall in productivity since 1955-56 and the decline in area since 1975-76.

The district-wise variation of production between 1957-58 and 1980-81 shows that 4 out of the 9 districts which can be compared as shown in Table IV showed a decline in their production of coconut. Among these, in Alleppey area declined most sharply by 41 per cent. Among the 5 other districts which increased their production Palghat tops the list with 321 per cent. Among the other two districts of Idukki and Ernakulam formed later, a comparison of production between 1973-74 and 1980-81 shows that in both production declined.

Table III

Production of coconut through the Plans

Plans	Percentage variation in production
First	53.04
Second	1.19
Third	1.42
Annual	11.94
Fourth	—6.40
Fifth	—17.75
Anuual	—.84

Note : Base years are the first year of each plan period.

Source : Compiled from Report on the Marketing of Coconut in India, Agricultural Marketing Advisor, Directorate of Marketing and Inspection ; Agricultural Statistics, in Kerala, 1975, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Statistics for Planning 1977 and Statistics for Planning 1980, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Kerala.

The main reasons for the decline in production were decline in area and the impact of root-wilt. While Idukki and Malappuram showed declines in production due mainly to reduction in area, in Trivandrum and Quilon production declined mainly due to the impact of root-wilt. In Alleppey production declined due to the impact of a composite of influences mentioned above, namely root-wilt and reduction in area.

A comparison of variation of production of other important crops, compared to coconut between 1952-53 and 1980-81 shows that percentage change for coconut remained almost stagnant with a marginal increase of 1 per cent, certain perennials such as rubber and coffee increased their production by more than 6 times. This shows how crops such as coffee and rubber have become more popular than coconut and how these crops are

displacing coconut. Coconut, of course, did not perform as badly as Ragi whose production declined by 80 per cent. When all these crops are taken together it may be observed that there is an average increase in production of 116.86 per cent.

Table IV

Districtwise produciion of coconut in 1957-58, 1973-74 and 1980-81

(in million nuts)

District	1957-58	1973-74	1980-81	Percentage variation
Trivandrum	370		354	—4.32
Quilon	424		314	—18.87
Alleppey	503		294	—41.55
Kottayam	136		188	38.24
Idukki		123	43	—65.04
Ernakulam	221		327	47.96
Trichur	220		347	57.73
Palghat	19		80	321.05
Malappuram		307	264	—14.01
Kozhikode	351		456	29.91
Cannanore	315		311	—1.27

Note : Since between 1957-58 & 1980-81 the districts of Kerala, were re-organised certain changes have been made as follows. As Idukki was part of Kottayam, the 1957-58 figure for Kottayam has been reduced by 3/5th and similarly that for Ernakulam has been reduced by 1/4th. Malappuram was a part of Palghat & Kozhikode and therefore their area has been reduced by 2/5th and 1/2 respectively.

Source : Agricultural Statistics in Kerala, 1975, Bureau of Economics & Statistics : Statistics for Planning 1977, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Kerala.

Productivity Changes

From Table V we see a picture of decline of yield from the second lan. In fact the decline began actually since 1955-56 which was the last ear of the first plan. The main reason for the continuous decline in ield from 1955-56 is the worsening root-wilt disease. This is borne out ven from the recent state government declaration that an additional four istricts are root-wilt affected. Till the 1960s only four districts were oot-wilt affected which were Quilon, Kottayam, Alleppey and Ernakulam.

Now the districts which have been newly affected are Trichur, Idukki, Pathanamthitta and Trivandrum.

Table V

Yield of coconut through the Plans

Plants	Percentage change of yield during the plan period
First	39.83
Second	—7.07
Third	—8.38
Annual	—0 53
Fourth	—11.04
Fifth	—8.81
Annual	—1.30

Note : Base years are the first year of each plan period.

Source : Compiled from Report on the Marketing of Coconut in India, Agricultural Marketing Advisor, Directorate of Marketing and Inspection ; Agricultural Statistics in Kerala, 1975, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Statistics for Planning 1977 and Statistics for Planning 1980, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Kerala.

Also over the years coconut cultivation has been extended to more and more marginal lands. This could be another cause for the decline in yield, though this may not be as significant as the other reasons given above. Though new area has been added on to coconut cultivation which is mainly sub-marginal and marginal land, land which was earlier under coconut has been converted to rubber cultivation etc, urbanisation and housing development in rural areas.

A study of changes in yield of various districts between 1957-58 and 1973-74 on the one hand and between 1973-74 and 1980-81 shows the following. Firstly, the yield changes between 1957-58 and 1973-74 show declines in all districts. The reason for this decline in yield is due to the worsening root-wilt. Secondly a comparison of yield between 1973-74 and 1980-81 shows that out of the 11 districts, 4 districts increased their yield. But 6 districts recorded declines in yield. Yield increased in the 4 districts mainly due to reduction in uneconomic palms. But it must be noted that while yield increased in certain districts since the fifth plan, the rate of decline in yield in certain other districts also declined.

A comparison of the performance of coconut to that of other crops between 1952-53 and 1981-82 shows that while yield of coconut declined by 33 percent the yield of most crops increased. Out of about 15 other crops

which were compared 9 crops which include ginger, arecanut, ta and tea increased their yield by about 250, 135, 124 and 108 pe respectively. The average yield performance of the crops taken toge was an increase of 39 percent.

From Table VI we see that area contributed substantially to produc during the second and third plans. But during these plans, yield ad sely affected production. Since the first annual plans, and till the sec annual plans we see that yield positively contributed to production w the contribution of area to yield was positive and negative alternatively

Table VI

Contribution of Area and Productivity in Production Changes through the Plans

Plan	Yield effect (Percentage)	Area effect (Percentage)	Interacti effect (Pe centag
First	75.30	17.62	7.08
Second	—591.76	745.00	—52.60
Third	—395.21	1139.44	—144.24
Annual	4.48	105.05	0.57
Fourth	172.66	—81.72	9.06
Fifth	49.17	56.35	—5.52
Annual	154.14	—54.85	0.71

Source: P. S. George, The Coconut Economy of Kerala analysis of production trends and projections), Ed. M Oommon, *Kerala Economy Since Independence,* Oxford IBH Publishing House, 1979.

Farm Price Movements

Table VII shows that farm prices have been increasing throughout plans though at different rates. The third and fourth plans are notewo for registering big increases in farm prices. These increases in farm pı are what made coconut cultivation look remunerative even though t was the impact of the root-wilt leading to decreases in productivity production. In 1983 and 1984 there was a big spurt in coconut pı due to scarcity and this has influenced farmers to plant additional pa and increase the cultivation of coconut.

Table VII

Farm prices of coconut through the plans

Plans	Percentage change
Second	39.74
Third	83.21
Aunual	6.54
Fourth	78.47
Fifth	15.96

Source : Calculated from Agricultural Statistics in Kerala, 1975, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Kerala, Statistics for Planning 1977 and Statistics for Planning 1980, Directorate of Economic and Statistics, Kerala.

Note : Base years are the first years of each plan.

A comparison of farm prices of some important crops with coconut shows that coconut registered the fourth highest increase among the 9 crops between 1955-56 and 1981-82. Coconut farm prices increased by 780 per cent. In comparison to the average increase in farm price of 1522 per cent the increase in coconut farm prices was lower.

The wholesale price of coconut was increasing at lower rates compared to farm prices during the second and third plans and during the first annual plan wholesale prices declined while farm prices increased though at a very slow rate. During the fourth plan also farm prices increased faster than wholesale prices but in the fifth plan the farm prices increased at a slow rate while wholesale prices increased much faster than farm prices of coconut.

When cumulative percentage variations of wholesale and farm prices were compared it was found that over the 23 year period between 1955-56 and 1977-78 wholesale prices increased 5.28 per cent more than farm prices.

Size-wise Study of Coconut Farmers

The following table gives a size-wise distribution of coconut holdings in Kerala.

Table VIII

Size-wise distribution of coconut holdings in Kerala

Size of holding in hectares	Percentage of holding
Less than 0.2	37.1
0.2—1.0	52.8
1.3—2.0	7.9
2.0 & above	2.2

Source : P. K. Thampan, *Coconut Culture in India*, The Green Villa Publishers, 1972, p. 6.

If we classify farmers having holding below 0.2 hectares as tiny holdings and between 0.2 and 1.0 hectares as small holdings, we find that these two groups dominate the coconut holdings, especially the small farmers.

Below we give case studies of tiny, small, medium (1.0—2.0 hectares) and large farmers (2.0 hectares and above). The data have been compiled from field survey during 1982-83.

Tiny Farmer

We have for this case study a farmer with 0.12 hectares of coconut cultivation. We find that he does not have any marketable surplus of coconut. His household has an annual expenditure of 8,736 rupees while the net household income is only 6101 rupees. Thus he incurs a debt of Rs. 2635. It is noteworthy that his major source of income is through remittances from relatives to the tune of Rs. 4200. His paid cost of production is as follows :

Paid cost of production	=Rs. 162
Labour cost Tilling	=Rs. 60
Labour cost Plucking	=Rs. 55
Farm yard manure	=Rs. 27
Pesticides	=Rs. 20

Here we notice that the tiny farmer does not spend much on fertilizers and that his main costs are labour costs. Under labour cost we find that even tilling which can be normally done by the farmer is got done by hired labour at the cost of Rs. 20 per day. This is because this tiny farmer did not find time to do tilling. We also see that pesticides are applied to the tree. This is done as a measure against root-wilt. In fact root-wilt has become a major problem for the tiny farmer.

Below we show the imputed cost of production for this small farmer :

Imputed cost of production	=Rs. 137
Labour cost	=Rs. 120
Farm yard manure	=Rs. 17

Small Farmer

We next take a farmer with 0 71 ha. of coconut land. We find he has no imputed cost but only paid costs whose break up is as follows :

Paid cost of production	= Rs. 2262
Tilling Rs. 20per day	= Rs. 400
Chemical fertilizer	= Rs. 752
Chemical fertilizer labour cost	= Rs. 80
Plucking cost Rs. 50 paise per tree and 12 nuts per 100 palm	= Rs. 570
Gathering charges	= Rs. 480

But his profit from coconut cultivation is quite meagre. It is only Rs. 1076. He meets the substantial portion of his household expenditure from non-agricultural source.

Household expenditure	Rs. 15612
Remittance from Kuwait	Rs. 13800

With this farmer we find that Rs. 752 is paid for chemical fertilizers. Thus due to the high price of chemical fertilizers, the cost of production for the small farmer has increased substantially.

Medium Farmer

This medium farmer has a total of 1.62 hectares of land. Out of this .81 hectare is coconut garden. His profit and cost of production is as follows :

Gross revenue	Rs. 7603
Paid cost of production	Rs. 2169
Of which : Tilling cost	Rs. 240
Chemical fertilizer	Rs. 750
Chemical fertilizer application labour cost	Rs. 150
Farm yard manure	Rs. 24
Farm yard manure application labour cost	Rs. 30
Plucking charges	Rs. 420
Gathering labour cost	Rs. 210
Taking pits labour cost	Rs. 300
Irrigation cost	Rs 45
Net profit	Rs. 5434

In this case this farmer met most of his household expenditure of Rs. 5884 from his profit from coconut of Rs. 5434. This farmer also had taken a loan of Rs. 12,000 for which he was giving an interest of Rs 2160. His imputed production costs are following :

Imputed production cost	Rs. 430
Farm yard manure	Rs. 220
Farm yard manure application labour cost	Rs. 105
Gathering labour cost	Rs. 105

Large Farmer

This large farmer has garden land of 4.31 hectares. This farmer had the following costs of production and profit.

Gross income from coconut	Rs. 18,706
Paid cost of production	Rs. 6,004
Of which :	
Tilling labour cost @ 20 paise	Rs. 640
Chemical fertilizer cost	Rs. 390
Chemical fertilizer application labour cost	Rs. 160
Farm yard manure	Rs. 2225
Farm yard manure application labour cost	Rs. 160
Plucking cost	Rs. 1282
Gathering cost	Rs. 697
Pesticides use	Rs. 450

This large farmer did not have any imputed cost. His household expenditure was 12,900 rupees which he met mainly from coconut.

Thus we see that while the tiny farmer had debts and could not sustain his family from coconut cultivation, the small farmer had to depend on non-agricultural sources for his livelihood. The medium farmer on the other hand just managed to make both ends meet, while the large farmer had enough savings after all his expenditure was met.

Action Programme for the Seventh Plan

If processing units are controlled by cultivators, price control and artificial scarcity can be avoided because middlemen and processors can be eliminated. Also to face the powerful middlemen, the cocount growers in the state should join into a cooperative or cooperatives. And to remove the hold on coconut cultivators by merchants, the Coconut Development Board or a state-wide co-operative or a government sponsored system should take over the purchasing of coconut from the farms.

To find a final solution to the problem of decline in yield and thus of the increasing uneconomic nature of coconut cultivation, an effective cure should be found for the root-wilt.

The coconut oil import policy of the central government has also been found to adversely affect the coconut cultivators of Kerala and the coconut oil manufacturing units in the small scale sector. Therefore the central government should adopt a coconut oil import policy which does not adversely affect the Kerala economy.

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1. See P. S. George, The Coconut Economy of Kerala (An Analysis of Production trends and projections) Ed. M.A. Oommen, *Kerala Economy Since Independence*, Oxford and IBH Publishing House, 1979.
2. *Ibid.*
3. See *Report of the Committee on Commodity Taxation*, Government of Kerala, 1979.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. P.S. George, *op. cit.*

Image of India

G. BONGARD-LEVIN & A. VIGASIN, *The Image of India*, The Study of Ancient Indian Civilization in the USSR, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1984. pp. 270.

As a necessary part of the colonial expansion to the East, the image of India as a land of wisdom, wonders and fabulous wealth, gradually took shape in Western and Eastern Europe, as well as the Middle East. After the 14th century journeys to India played an important role in transforming knowledge about India, on the basis of an acquaintance with the country and its culture. Although the Indian influence initially spread to many countries through Graeco-Roman culture, and was reflected in the written and oral tradition of their people, it was later to be interpreted in the form of symbols that would aid the Biblical cosmogony, which was generally in dispute with the Graeco-Roman theories of the Cosmos. The Christianisation of India was part of theological polemics and the struggle of ideas, so that India emerged in folk-lore as a fabulous land, inhabited by righteous people. In the period of the Crusades, Europe displayed a great interest in the wealth of the East, giving rise to the myth of a great Christian kingdom in the East. In the folk-lore tradition, "rich India" became an integral element in the heroic epic, where historical and geographical reality were eroded and conventionalised because of the didactic purpose.

The view of India, as a country existing regardless of time, and never changing over a period that covered 2,000 years, was typical of Medieval literature. By the 17th century, the *Cosmographia* effected departure in the field of Indian studies, since its purpose was neither literary nor didactic, but practical: to aid conquest, diplomacy and to implant the "true faith" and eradicate paganism in the East. Nikitin's journal of his journey to India, however stands apart, as he was a foreigner with modest means, who was obliged to be friendly with the local people, and there is scarcely a word that is arrogant or derogatory in his *Voyages*. He is also the first to point to the similarities between Indian and Russian Grandees and the plight of the rural poor. From such a beginning, the Russian school of Indology, based on the historiographic method, brought to light many insights in the field of Ancient Indian civilisation, as a part of the mainstream of cultural development in the world.

As a method, historiography surveys the field and identifies specif questions which need to be raised and discussed, particularly where th character of source materials relies too much on supposition and hypo thesis. It also stresses not only the accumulation of ideas in such a survey but also the struggle of ideas which is a part of the cultural life of an country. Historiographic research ranges over philosophy and politic: literature and art, the general spiritual climate of the age and the specifi "national spirit" of the area under study. In contrast to this, the economi and political penetration of the leading West European countries into Asia led to the ideology of colonialism having an unfavourable influence o scientific research in the field of Oriental studies. As a result, Britisl Indology exhibits scornful opinions of the people and culture of the Eas as well as the idea of the superiority of European civilization. This wa as much a distortion, as the earlier Romantic view current in Germany of overestimating the ancient age of Indian culture and considering it to b the source of world civilization.

The Russian school is not widely know in our country because o language difficulties and the general prejudice against Russian scholarship *The Image of India* brings to our notice the wealth of literature that ha been translated for research in the USSR on the subject of Indian cultur and history, and reveals a deep respect for the Indian people and a desir to understand developments that link India with the rest of the world It covers the pre-18th century period and subsequently, the developmen of Soviet Indology, in the best Russian Oriental studies tradition. The Russian tradition differs from the European in that that it was based or the 18th century Enlighteners, who were opposed to Tsarist policies and ideology. The 19th century brought in liberal and democratic thoughts which were anti-colonial and placed the Russians on the side of the enslaved people of the East who were struggling for liberation from the yoke of colonial exploitation. After the October Revolution, Lenin played an important role in bringing about many fundamental changes in Oriental Studies as a part of the programme of socialist construction and stressed the need for spreading knowledge about India among the broad strata of the Russian masses.

Such a historical perspective establishes the fact that Russian science did not concentrate almost exclusively on the people of Europe whilst ignoring the great thousand year old history of the other people of the world. The Russians held that there could be no world history that did not include the East, in contrast to historians like von Ranke who provided a theoretical basis for excluding India from the general process of world history. The absence of Eurocentrism is a distinguishing feature of Soviet Indology. The Russians considered the aim of science to be the study of mankind, whose unity was more important than the barriers of the natural or socio-cultural environment. Vasilyev

own history, their own development, their own views". For such scholars, the lagging behind of the East was a temporary phenomenon. "When the world becomes unified...the East will not only be a repository of education, but also its motive force. (p.81)

The third feature is the historical approach. Minayev wrote: In portraying the destiny of a religion we must discover the laws determining its development", (p.83) and again : "the essence of any spiritual development reveals itself to us in the entirety of its historical development and can be understood only when this process is traced back to the beginning. And this way its sources are revealed." He was one of the first scholars to give an impartial assessment of British colonial policy and its disastrous consequences for India.

A study of monuments, manuscripts, excavated materials was combined with the views of guides, local pundits and scholars. Minayev wrote in his Indian diary. "Engrossed in Jain manuscript, chose one and wanted a copy of it, on which grounds I had a curious conversation with the Principal, who insisted that I approach Dr. Buhler for information about the Jains and when I pointed out that the native scholars could give me the same information (he) categorically denied this. Dastur who was present at this conversation was extremely displeased at this remark and...(said) these English do not understand anything." (p.89)

Evident too was the desire not only to study the relics of Ancient Indian culture but also to preserve them, because the ancient and the modern were two sides of single object of research—the spiritual and material culture of a nation.(p.85)

The importance of placing the independence of Indian scholarship on a firm foundation lies behind Minayev's distinction between the scientific western scholars and those serving the interests of the British administration in India.(p.90)

In Russian Universities of the last century, there were usually departments of comparative linguistics and Sanskrit, probably as a result of the interest of the Tsarist government to expand trade directly with India, but when such an enterprise did not succeed, Indology was not given any encouragement. For the Russian scholar the East could not be a dead, bookish object of scientific inquisitiveness, just as the study of Ancient India was not meant to push into the background the scientific and practical importance of vital phenomena in contemporary India. (p.103) There was a strong realisation that the East was no longer a slumbering giant. It was also significant that many parts of Central Asia were incorporated into Russia, which had been in direct contact with countries that bordered India (at some time they had even formed one state).

However, these progressive principles did not recieve Tsarist support, as Oriental studies was thought of as a part of the study of classical languages ; an armchair science, which was also the general position of Indology in Europe at the time

At the turn of the century, there was a growing interest philosophy and religion, as well as literature. Tolstoy was very i with Buddhism, Brahminism and the fairy-tale. He reflected the of his age in the religion and literature of India. This pointe shortcomings of this early school of Indology, that it concentra Ancient Indian culture and ignored her social and political histor the field of culture also, it concentrated primarily on Buddhism. Ver attention was paid to contemporary India.

It was time to set new tasks for Russian Indology if it was suffer from the extreme individualism and lack of organisation of W Indology. Oldenburg had identified the cause of this as "insufi closeness to life" (p. 110) Secondly, no importance was attached t Eastern scholarly tradition, which was contrasted with the W tradition as the only true one. Oldenburg belonged to the opposite tion that every cultured nation had its own understanding of its c and if any scholar had to scientifically analyse such a tradition, he h take into account such a scholarly tradition. He also stood for the of the world-historical process and did not believe in opposing Eas West. Whilst criticising Eurocentrism he also came out against ex nationalism, which was a feature of some Indian works of history culture. He introduced a consistent historical method, including th literary criticism, and all cultural phenomena were not of abstract in to him, but a part of the general course of historical development. (p. He therefore was the first to point to the importance of Harappan ex tions and always stressed the sociological basis of analysis, which him oppose the widely held view of all-embracing spiritualism in I "It is high time", he wrote, "to put an end to the legend that In specifically, as it were, a purely religious country : there is, of cours doubt that in this field India showed great creativity, but it is eq beyond question that Indians, like other peoples, have a complex s pattern, that her agriculture in the countryside, the crafts, the ind and the trade of her towns had an important place in India's life, n than in other countries, and that without a knowledge and understa of her economic life we shall never understand India and her con history." (p. 117) He therefore stressed the importance of epigraph the *shastras* which he felt were an important source for the history o Indian economy and the class struggle. Oldenburg expressed an un belief in the possibilities of Eastern nations, contrary to the arm scientists, who took a narrow view of the subject. Whilst the Aca of Science, of which Oldenburg was permanent secretary, was treated distrust by the Tsarist government, Lenin personally directed scien the task of building socialism. Thus the Academy was revived with a tion, assistance and genuine support.

As Oldenburg wrote in 1919 : "For mankind to-day, which th

it is essential to know as much as possible of what has already been done by mankind in this respect." On the need to study Buddhism he wrote : "Nowhere in the world . . . can there have been a people who sought with such effort and intensity to find answers to questions of life and death, of the purpose and meaning of life, as in India . . . the history of India is extremely important for understanding the history of mankind as a whole, and this history is essential to us for a proper understanding of reality." (p. 122) Another important input into the new direction of Soviet Indology which Oldenburg's experience and expertise developed, was the radical change in the nationalities policy, which would change the basic principles of Oriental Studies. This meant more attention to social and economic problems and class structure and modern and contemporary history, to help in the full development of all nationalities. In the 1920-30 period there was a great expansion of the scope of Indology, influenced by the needs and the character of the Revolution.

This innovatory approach was represented in the work of Shcherbatskoy, who collaborated with leading scientists in India. His ideas clearly worked in the direction that although Indian culture was original and specific, it should be compared typologically with Graeco-Roman, not only to show a resemblance, but to attract special attention to Ancient India, which had been given insufficient attention by Western scholars. His work on the Buddhist use of logic and dialectics opposed the Western theory that in India logic was borrowed from the Greeks, and Shcherbatskoy showed how it was an entirely original product, which developed in the natural course of Buddhism's ideological debates with Brahminism. Many scholars at that time had shared Hegels view that oriental philosophy should be excluded from the history of philosophy, since philosophical recognition could not take place. Shcherbatskoy saw at the base of the struggle of different trends in Indian philosophy, not only the opposition of diverse conceptions but also the clash of social groups, the people who were the bearers of these ideas. Another important theme was that all schools of philosophy reflected the opposition of two basic trends—the realistic and the idealistic. It is Shcherbatskoy who payed special attention to the study of materialist trends in Indian philosophy. (p. 130)

The purpose of his research was to introduce the skills of Indian logicians into the practice of contemporary education, in the same way that Plato and Aristotle were studied. This approach neither wished to contrast Eastern and Western culture, nor to draw them closer, artificially. As a result, his study of Buddhism disclosed the achievements of India over 10 centuries when Indian science, literature and technology attained unprecedented heights. His interpretation of the concept of *Dharma* and *Nirvana* showed that Buddhism was a constantly changing doctrine, frequently containing within the same framework, opposite categories and ideas. He firmly opposed a mystical interpretation of Buddhism, since he felt that no scientific philosophy could be necessarily subject to it. (p. 137)

He proved by his unique method that Buddhist logic is logic is not Aristotlean. That it is epistemological, but not Kantian. (p. 13

Once the Marxist base of Oriental studies was established understanding that the oppressed people of Asia were the natura of the class consious workers of Europe, new trends in Soviet In began to lead not only European scholarship but also national s in Asian countries. (p. 148)

The first task was to overcome the shortcomings of the rese the thirties, which had not given proper attention to social and ec problems, or even contemporary problems of culture. There was tendency to idealize. By this time, the idea of a special path of d ment (The Asiatic Mode) was debated, but mistakenly approximate the pattern of European development, with a stress on the slave mode of production. However, in the forties and the fifties the w Osipov Suleikin and Ilyin concentrated on the problems of period and the specific conclusions drawn by Indian historians. The race (theory of the Varna system was rejected and the question of slave put into a socio economic context. (p. 157) The work of Soviet his covered important questions and answered them in the light of ev from ancient Indian sources and Marx's well-known articles on India

In the contemporary period, the works of Chanana, Kosamb Sharma and S. Jaiswal were referred to in the search for the gener and specific character of the development of Ancient India, the eme of classes and the state and social and economic formations. (p. 166) new areas of study included the Harappan civilisation, archeolo anthropology, the contribution of non-Aryan people, and the signi of the "theory of Aryan conquest" which had been over-played West. Research is also being done on the Mauryan period, the K period and the social and economic relations in India at the (p. 175).

In this new work the attitude to ancient sources is more pains The problem of the source-language, understanding its concept and te logy is posed. The complexity of the social structure is accepted. is also a renewed interest in literary criticism, linguistics and philo In this process all the sources that have been collected in the Soviet are being published and the institutional structure also constantly re to allow the greatest freedom and assistance to scholars, which ha perhaps the most important input into the high quality of the schol that this book reports to the general reader. The wide scope of schol that is opening up before us does not allow us to ignore the work o who have, with sincerity and seriousness, attempted to study the historical process in our country. The ideas and the materials the researched should enrich our own efforts at building a scientific sch national studies, and just as the polemics of our scholars have en the insights gained by the Soviet school their criticism of our wo

help to develop sharper theoretical formulation as well as a more rigorous research and generalisation. What is remarkable is the quantum of work, the development of a proper methodology and its systematic application to the culture of India. What is disheartening is that such a book is generally by-passed, and such scholarship is generally ignored.

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Editorial Note

CONTEMPORARY India is marked by a striking paradox. India's struggle for freedom was undoubtedly one of the outstanding events of the twentieth century ; there was not only something grand about the spectacle of a people constituting a sixth of humanity moving towards liberation from alien rule which had oppressed them for nearly two centuries, but what is more, this struggle also played a major role in precipitating a collapse of the entire colonial system all over the world. And yet within barely four decades of independence, this momentous event appears to have been relegated from the collective memory of the people to the oblivion of text-books. As separatism, chauvinism, casteism, communalism and even secessionism tear asunder the integrity of the nation, the arduousness of the process through which this nation came into being appears to figure no longer in our living thoughts

A discussion of the National Movement becomes important at this point, not for sentimental reasons of harking back to the "good old days", nor as a psychological antidote to the current malaise, but in order to understand this paradox. To be sure, a prod to our collective memory cannot but be beneficial at this juncture, but intervention in the present context requires much more than such prods It requires a process of recovery of the past, based on analysis. Not only the National Movement, but also its sequel, the post-independence experience, including the apparently evanescent nature of its unifying impact, have to be analysed with care for effective intervention in the present context. It is towards this end that *Social Scientist* had organised a seminar in January 1986 on the subject of the National Movement. The current number of the journal carries some of the papers presented at that Seminar.

The different papers included in this number deal of course with different aspects of the National Movement ; all of them moreover donot share a common understanding. For instance, Bipan Chandra argues that the Indian National Congress as an organisation was open to ideological transformation towards a socialist perspective ; the task before the Left was to work towards such a transformation of the Congress and through it of the National Movement, where socialism would emerge as the accepted developmental path of free India, rather than to create alternatives to the Congress or to Gandhi's leadership. Thomas Isaac on the other hand, basing himself on the Kerala experience, argues that independent mass mobilisation of the workers and peasants, without which not only

would any socialist path remain a chimera, but even the basic tasks of the democratic revolution would remain uncompleted, was constrained by the Congress leadership, which more or less forced the Left to break away from it and organise through stages the Communist Party. Kapil Kumar likewise is of the view that the Congress leadership functioned with a twin-objective : while fighting imperialism it strove quite clearly to curb the Left and the Kisan Sabha. Few of course would deny that the Left committed mistakes from time to time in its assessment of the situation , the difference relates to the validity of the overall strategic conception of the Left and the communists in particular.

The crucial question, as emphasised in the paper by B.T. Ranadive, relates to the role of the agrarian revolution. The National Liberation Struggle can lead on to a struggle for socialism via the agrarian revolution. Working class hegemony over the National Liberation Struggle serves precisely to link this struggle with the agrarian revolution. Bourgeois hegemony over the National Liberation Struggle by contrast delinks this struggle from the agrarian revolution. In the process however it does not even carry through the democratic revolution to its completion ; the result, as in free India, is a superimposition of capitalist development upon pre-capitalist structures, which not only arrest the vigour of capitalist development, but greatly enhance the burden upon the people and preserve the soil upon which casteist, communalist and localist ideologies thrive. Indeed in the context of capitalist development of this kind, which brings in its train the familiar quota of aggrandisement, impoverishment, frustrations and disappointments, there is a danger of these ideological perceptions which are disruptive of the unity of the working people, getting strengthened over time, as has happened in our country.

The politics of compromise and bargaining with the British, which the bourgeois leadership of the National Movement adopted as a necessary counterpart to its efforts to keep a tight leash upon mass struggles, lest they develop into a torrent leading to an agrarian revolution, had a tragic consequence according to E.M.S. Namboodiripad, namely the partition of the country. Gandhi alone of the entire leadership saw in partition the tragedy of the freedom that had been won. The very incompletness of the democratic revolution, however, imposes according to the author a certain continuity, though in changed circumstances, to the task of the Left. The Left cannot just forget about the completion of the democratic revolution now that the country is free from foreign rule ; on the contrary it has to struggle now, as it sought to struggle earlier, for completing the basic tasks of the democratic revolution, at the centre of which is the agrarian question.

*E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD**

The Left In India's Freedom Movement And In Free India

THE AUTHOR of this paper has been an active participant in the left movement since the early 1930s. His personal knowledge of the movement is naturally confined to the progress registered during the last half century. The left movement, however, dates back to the early years of the present century, or almost three decades earlier than the author's entry into it.

The Lal-Bal-Pal Leadership

The emergence of the left movement in India coincided with radical trends in the anti-imperialist movements in several other colonial, semi-colonial and dependent countries, particularly in Asia. The defeat of Czarist Russia at the hands of a newly emerging Asian imperialist power (Japan) and the first Russian Revolution (1905) inspired radical forces throughout Asia. Lenin in his writings noted this new trend in the oppressed countries which, he pointed out, could become an integral part of the revolutionary movement developing in the capitalist countries. Demarcating himself from the right-wing Social Democrats of the second International who took a negative stand on the freedom struggles of the oppressed peoples, he did his best to educate the revolutionaries in the international movement on the importance of fraternal cooperation between the two forces—the working class in capitalist countries fighting for socialism and the peoples of the oppressed countries trying to throw off the colonial yoke.

On India in particular, Lenin made a positive assessment of the emerging left in the freedom movement headed by Lokmanya Tilak who made the historic declaration "Swaraj is my birth right; and I will have it". The barbarous sentence given by a British court to the Lokmanya, following which there was a protest general strike of the Bombay working class, was noted by Lenin as a significant pointer to the emergence of a national revolutionary trend in India.

Tilak and his distinguished colleagues Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal—known as the Lal-Pal-Bal trio—introduced what came to be known as the "politics of militancy", as opposed to that of

*General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Marxist).

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It was at this stage that revolut... Punjab and to a certain extent in other provinces ... were denounced as "terrorists" by the ... the resolve to do away with the hated individuals ... foreigners and their agents among the Indians ... formed in foreign countries where Indians were ...

Revolutionary Groups Abroad

These groups of revolutionaries working abroad started plan liberation of India with assistance from powers hostile to the Br Ghadar Party was formed in the U.S. in 1913 with a view to scattered Indian revolutionary and patriotic organisations whic earlier emerged in the U.S. and Canada. Similar groups were for some of the European countries and tried to get financial and milita from Britain's main imperialist rival, Germany, for an anti-British uprising in India.

The essence of leftism, or what may be called "the polit militancy", thus consisted of the use of force against individual repre tives of the British power by those who are working inside the c and the assistance of Britain's imperialist rivals for liberating Indi outside. British imperialism, however, was able to suppress the r tionary groups which had been operating in India before and duri war. The few efforts made abroad to liberate India with materi military assistance from foreign powers also ended in a fiasco.

Two developments of post-war years, however gave new life left and helped it to assume new forms. The first was internal. Rese was growing among all sections of the Indian people against the p and actions of the British Government to which concrete expressic given by the Congress and the Muslim League which gradually dev into a new mass upsurge – the non-co-operation or the Khilafat mov Initiated by Mahatma Gandhi with full co-operation from the M leaders who carried a special grievance on account of the treatment out by the imperialists to the Turkish Khalifa, the movement env

andhi's programme of triple boycott, his slogan of
ited campaigns undertaken by the Congress and the
out the country—all these brought into action hun-
young men and women, the first countrywide mass
in India.

Russian Revolution

lel to this internal development was the international develop-
e October Revolution in Russia. Indian revolutionaries living and
abroad began to converge on Moscow, while several people
in India for the revolutionary cause left the country. Braving the
of a trek over the Himalayas, the latter landed first in Afghanistan
in the Asian Republics of Russia. Revolutionary grou s operating
bul in Afghanistan, Tashkent in one of the Eastern Republics of
oviet Union and in Moscow itself came into contact with the Soviet
mmunist Party, many of them having personal interviews with Lenin
imself Moved by the i spiring slogan of self-determination for oppressed
nationalities given by the Soviet Government and the Russian Communist
Party, they took the side of the Soviets, many of them participating per-
sonally in the defence of the Soviet State against the attacks of the reac-
tionaries in the Civil War. Their very stay abroad and the stories of their
activities influenced large numbers of revolutionaries in India itself

A new dimension was thus given to the perspectives and plans of the earlier revolutionaries. Those who, during the years preceding the war and, during the war itself, were trying to get material and military assistance from Britain's imperialist rivals, started thinking of getting the same assistance from Soviet Russia. Many of them committed themselves to the idea of communism, though their understanding of communism was hazy and distorted The Russian Communist Party, its leader Lenin and the Communist International paid great attention to the revolutionary emigres staying on the soil of their country not only from India but from other Asian countries, particularly China, Korea. Iran and Turkey Groups and organisations of Communists hailing from these oppressed Asian countries were formed and the specific pro lems they raised came under discussion at the First and Second Congresses of the Communist International Lenin himself took personal interest in and gave a lot of his time to understand the problems raised by the comrades coming from these countries

Patient Work by Lenin

Finding that many of these emigre comrades had a poor understanding of the theory and were equally lacking in the understanding of the concrete conditions of the struggle in their respective countries, Lenin worked patiently to combat their simplistic ideas of communism, their efforts to transplant the Bolshevism of Soviet Russia to countries which had very little resemblance to pre-revolutionary Russia. Cautioning against painting

the national revolutionaries in Communist colours, Lenin disapproved of the idea of the hasty formation of the Communist Party in these countries. He, however, emphasised the need for convinced communists in these countries to organise themselves as a party and try to apply the general principles of Marxism to the concrete conditions of their respective countries. While advising them to form themselves into an independent revolutionary party, he called for united front between the national revolutionaries and communists. He had to combat the sectarian ideas put by India's M.N. Roy and his counterparts in China, Korea, Turkey and Iran. This helped the consolidation of the small groups of Indian communists in the Soviet Union and in the formation of communist groups in India itself.

The communist groups living in the Soviet Union being small in number and away from the country, could not exert any direct influence on the course of development in India itself. Their activities abroad and the links that were established between them and the scattered groups of communists in India however, were important for the future development of the left movement in the country.

The First CPI in Tashkent

Among the groups abroad, special mention should be made of a group in Berlin and another in the Soviet cities of Tashkent and Moscow. The latter formally came into being on October 17, 1920 and was granted a consultative status at the Third Congress of the Communist International. This, according to one of the founder members of the Communist Party of India, the late Muzaffar Ahmed, should be considered as the foundation date of the Party.

A Soviet scholar who has made an intensive study of all the materials available in the CPSU Archives tends to agree and says that "the Indian Communists who organised themselves in Tashkent and Moscow was the first Communist group which tried to create a Communist Party in exile and *by that act alone, had laid the ground for the Indian Communist movement.*"[1]

The author goes on to point out that many of the Communist groups at home (which in the end succeeded in convening the first open conference of the Indian Communists on Indian soil) "were created with full-scale participation or some times even upon the initiative of individual members of the Tashkent group, who had been expressly sent to India to that end." Most of the members of the Tashkent group, the author goes on, "had been sent to India to prepare the Communist Party and to Western Europe to establish a foreign Centre which is known to have subsequently played an essential role in launching the Communist movement in India."

Two Stages

It is thus clear that the formation of the Communist Party of India

took place in two stages—first on October 17, 1920 at Tashkent which had been given representation with consultative status in the Communist International. M. N. Roy, who was active in the formation of the Tashkent Group helped the dissemination of communist ideas in India through his letters, articles, messages, etc.,[2] addressed to left-inclined Congressmen and budding Communists. The work done by Roy and his organisation made a big contribution to the second stage of the formation of the CPI, namely, the Kanpur Conference of 1925 where the Communist Party of India was formally constituted on Indian soil.

It was because of these two stages in the development of the Indian Communist movement that the two conflicting dates were given by the Secretariat of the CPI and Muzaffar Ahmed respectively The former gave 1925 as the date because the Party formed earier in Tashkent and given consultative status at the Third Congress of the Comintern, was not formed on Indian soil; those who took the decision were prepared to consider only what took place on Indian soil as the foundation of the CPI.

It is, however, significant that even those who took the decision in favour of 1925 as the foundation of the CPI do not consider it as the First Congress of the Party. Nearly 16 years had to elapse between what according to them was the foundation of the Party and its first Congress. The reason is that, after the 1925 Conference where the Party was said to have been born, its activities had to face severe repression at the hands of the British rulers.

The Meerut Case and After

The notorious Meerut Conspiracy Case involving all the known Communist leaders of the time, disintegrated what had been form d at Kanpur. Furthermore, serious differences arose among those who remained outside the jail on the tactics to be pursued in the rapidly changing situation in India and abroad. For four full years since the Meerut arrests of 1929, the Party virtually ceased to exist as a Party, the small groups of Communists in some parts of the country acting as they thought fit While the tenacity with which these groups operated testified to the influence exerted by communism over large sections of anti-imperialists, the pronouncements and practices of these groups cannot be termed as the work of the Communist Party of India.

These difficulties could be overcome partly towards the end of 1933 when most of the Meerut case comrades came out of jail, but that could not overcome the difficulties caused by ideological confusion. These were removed only when the Seventh Congress of the Comintern (1935) gave the line of unity against fascism and as an integral part thereof, the anti-imperialist united front in countries like India. This helped in politically and organisationally unifying the various Communist groups which had, for several years been ideologically divided. It was from that time onwards that a stable

and continuing central leadership—the Central Committee and the Pol Bureau—came into existence.

Significant Developments

Significant developments had, in the meanwhile, taken place in th freedom movement. Under the influence of the Communist Party of Indi formed in Tashkent, national revolutionaries in India were gradually imb bing the idea of mass revolutionary action. Militant organisations of th working class, the peasants and other toiling people were being forme drawing tens of thousands of members.

At the ideological level, militant mass action was replacing individu action as the antidote to Gandhian non-violence. Vague ideas of Swar were being given a more concrete definition, such as complete indepe dence or severence of all connections with Britain, independence bein extended from political to economic independence and so on. Extensiv political campaigns were being carried on in favour of the unity of worke and peasants which is the basis for the struggle for complete independenc Larger and larger sections of freedom fighters were being drawn into th movement embracing all these ideas of proletarian—semi-proletaria militancy A broad revolutionary party (the Workers' and Peasants' Party came to be formed in which the activists of the Communist Party of Indi were working energetically.

The influence of all these was felt in the historic debate inside th Congress itself on Dominion Status *versus* Complete Independence. Th adoption of the latter as the objective of India's freedom movement an the decision to launch a countrywide mass struggle to attain the objectiv took place at a session of the Indian National Congress (Lahore, 1929 presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru who in his presidential address declare himself to be a Socialist. Fifteen months after this came the Karac Congress which adopted the resolution on the fundamental rights of th people which indicated a turn by the Congress to the left. The ideas o the basis of which the Communist Party of India was formed, first i Tashkent and then in Kanpur, thus had gripped the minds of lakhs of peopl and, in a way, became the official programme of the major organisatio of the freedom movement.

Militant Mass Action in Place of Individual Terrorism

A significant consequence of these developments was that the cult o the bomb, which had been the ideological basis of the militant groups fo almost three decades, ceased to operate. In its place came the programm of militant mass organisations and struggles. It influenced the lakhs o men and women who actively participated in the mass direct action organised under the Congress leadership in 1930-1932. Furthermore, th spectacular gains made by the Socialist Soviet Union in rapidly developin its economy at the very time when the capitalist world (of which India wa

a part) was going through an unprecedented crisis in history, exerted their influence on the people.

These developments abroad as well as in India brought about a basic change in the attitude of left-wing Congressmen. The Congress Socialist Party formed in 1933-34 was a manifestation of this change in the thinking and outlook of Congressmen. Coinciding as this did with the overcoming of the organisational, political and ideological difficulties facing the Communist Party of India, the mid-1930s witnessed the co-existence of three distinct left trends.

Firstly, an undefined group of Congressmen who talked vaguely of socialism, had unconcealed sympathy for the Soviet Union, was anti-fascitt and stood for the defence of the rights and freedom of the toiling people. Nehru was the best known leader of this group. Secondly, the newly-formed organisation of Congress Socialists whose members had the obligatory duty to work in the Congress but who formed themselves into a distinct party of their own. Thirdly, the re-organised Communist Party of India with its Central Committee and Polit Bureau having close links and co-operating with the other two groups.

The emergence of these three groups and their co-operation made the latter half of the 1930s remarkable for a new anti-imperialist upsurge which swept the country. The forging of the unity of the trade union movement, the formation of the All-India Kisan Sabha, the emergence of the All India Students' Federation, the rise of a progressive literary and cultural movement and united activities of the left in general, took the anti-imperialist movement several steps ahead.

Qualitatively Changed Left

Although separated by nearly three decades, the new united front of left forces in the 1930s was qualitatively different from the left forces which emerged under the Lal-Bal-Pal leadership.

The emergence of the latter was indicative of the fact that the bourgeoisie had become mature enough to operate as an independent force in political life. The triple slogan of Swaraj, Swadeshi and national education gave clear expression to the aspirations of the new class, the bourgeoisie. The large mass of petty-bourgeoisie who constituted the core of the revolutionaries with their cult of the bomb, were the younger camp-followers of the bourgeoisie.

The years of the war and the post-war mass upsurge further matured the bourgeoisie in whose ranks divisions started making their appearance, a section allying itself with the rapidly growing working class movement within the country and the socialist and national revolutionary forces abroad. Together with the further extension and consolidation of the left forces in terms of the new ideology of the working class, this planted the ideas of socialism and communism within the freedom movement.

All this at a time when imperialism was doing its utmost to prevent

the consolidation of the growing forces of socialism and communism in a well-organised Communist Party of India. The growth of a new trend within the Congress in the early 30s, however, could not be prevented: the Congress Socialist Party was born. In the meanwhile, as mentioned earlier, the Communist groups themselves could take advantage of the developing international and national situation to overcome their internal problems and develop a well-organised Party with its central leadership.

The relationship between the three forces—the Communists, the Congrss Socialists and left Congressmen—indicated the approach of three distinct class forces, namely the working class, the radical petty bourgeoisie and the left bourgeoisie. Within the latter itself, it was subsequently revealed, there was a division between those who were anti-imperialist and at the same time anti-fascist and those who did not hesitate to take the help of the fascist forces in the struggle against imperialism.

Clash of Ideas within the Left

The clash of ideas among these three forces was revealed in the internal crisis of the Congress that emerged in the furious conflict on the Congress President's election in 1939. All the three left forces were united in supporting Subhas Chandra Bose, as opposed to the Congress right supporting Pattabhi Sitaramayya. However, as soon as the Congress right took up this challenge and created a crisis which ended in the ouster of Subhas Bose from the Congress, differences were revealed between the Nehru and the Bose supporters among the left Congressmen, between both of them and the Congress Socialists, as well as between the latter and the Communists. All this came to a head when the Second World War broke out and on the question of the attitude to the war.

The conflict between the anti-Communist leadership of the CSP and the CPI had, in fact, come to the surface even before the outbreak of the war. The anti-Communist group in the CSP headed by Masani, Mehta and Lohia had already launched their attack on the Soviet Union internationally (on the question of the trial of the Generals) and ran a concerted anti-Communist witch hunting campaign within the Party. The news of the Soviet Union signing a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany on the eve of the outbreak of the war culminated in a hysterically anti-Soviet and anti-Communist campaign undertaken by the CSP (Jayaprakash, who had earlier kept away from the anti-Communist campaign, now joined it). The Communists within the CSP had therefore to leave the Party. The disintegration of the left was thus complete by the time the war broke out.

Indian Politics after the Outbreak of the War

The attitude adopted by the major political forces in the country to the war made a clear division among the main trends in the country. The

right-wing Congress leadership adopted the line of using the war situation for hard bargaining with imperialism which was manifested in the symbolic individual satyagraha launched under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership by those chosen by him. This was opposed by the rival bourgeois leadership represented by Subhas Bose who clandestinely went abroad, came into contact with the leaders of Nazi Germany and then landed himself in Japan—a repetition of the performance of the revolutionaries during the First World War.

As against both these sections of the bourgeois leadership arose a new leadership represented by the All-India Muslim League which, led by Mohammed Ali Jinnah, adopted the Lahore Resolution in 1940 demanding complete independence—not for a united India but for two (Muslim and Hindu) "nations" to be carved out of India.

The Congress Socialists were critical of the Congress leadership but failed to give any militant leadership to the fighting people. The CPI, on the contrary came out with what was called the "proletarian path"—a programme of organising and leading militant struggles of the working people on the living problems of their life which were being made more and more unbearable, turning these struggles into a revolutionary upheaval.

The Quit India Movement

With the opening of a new phase in the war—the attack of Nazi Germany on the Soviet Union, followed by the Japanese attack on America which obliged the imperialist powers headed by the U.K. and the U.S.A. to have an alliance with the Soviet Union, the situation underwent a complete change. The Congress leadership abandoned its earlier attitude of carrying on a symbolic individual satyagraha and prepared for an all-out offensive against imperialism. The preparation for this all-out offensive, however, was used to make hard bargains with imperialism (the Cripps Mission). But, once it was found that the British were not prepared to concede anything, the decision was taken to go into action.

The rival leadership of the bourgeoisie led by Subhas Bose had already reached Japan and used the help of that country to organise a march on India. Standing between these two sections of bourgeois leadership were the Congress Socialists who took hold of whatever was left of the Congress organisation after the arrests and organised new centres of resistance—a follow-up of the call given by Mahatma Gandhi for a "short and swift" struggle with the slogan "do or die". The CSP thus played its role as the junior partner of the bourgeois leadership—carrying forward the "short and swift" struggle, preparing the soil for a negotiated settlement with the British.

The CPI came out in opposition to all this and called on the Government and the people to look upon the anti-fascist war as a people's war. The Muslim League for its part intensified the campaign for Pakistan and

emerged as the second most powerful political force in the country

The CPI, an Independent Political Force

This was the first time that the Communist Party came c *active political force opposed to all other political forces includ Congress and the Muslim League, the Subhas Bose section of the b is leadership as well as the CSP. Despite the mistakes commi carrying out the policy of people's war (which were owned and coi by the Party in the Second Congress of 1948 and later), the Party h credit of having brought before the people the intimate conn*between India's struggle for freedom and the worldwide war ag fascism in which the Socialist Soviet Union was playing the decisive p

Subsequent developments in India and abroad proved the correc of this broad understanding : it was the victory of the anti-fascist f headed by the Sovit Union that paved the way for the subsequent at ment of freedom not only by India but a few other neighbouring coun immediately after the end of the war and, after a decade, of scor other countries of Asia and Africa. Propagating the truth abou epoch-making significance of the anti-fascist war, no doubt, isolate Party temporarily from the broad masses of anti-imperialist fighte however, did not lead to any weakening of the Party's position am the people in those states and regions where it had already develop a significant political force. The three years that elapsed betwee launching of the Quit India struggle by the Congress and the endin the war, in fact, saw an unprecedented growth of the Communist Par an independent force having strong links with the working people.

The Party was therefore able to actively intervene when a revolutionary mass upsurge arose after the end of the war. The cou wide strike wave, the militant demonstration for the release of prisoners, the glorious RIN mutiny, the historic Tebhaga strugg Bengal, innumerable other peasant struggles all over the country, a wave of the states 'peoples' struggle for democracy in their respe states—all these culminated in the two militant actions led by Communist Party—Punnappra-Vayalar in Travancore and Telenga Hyderabad.

The Fiasco of Bourgeois Politics

The right-wing leaders of the Congress who claimed to have he the Quit India struggle had, in the meanwhile, resumed their polit bargaining with the British imperialists. "The short and swift stru envisaged in the Quit India resolution was ruthlessly suppressed an mass of participants either felt frustrated or looked up to the INA l Subhas Bose to march to India. The right-wing Congress leadershi therefore no alternative to having a negotiated settlement on terms v proved disastrous for the country. Having had to choose between a u

but unfree India and a free but divided country, they opted for the latter—an option which was described by Mahatma Gandhi as the "vivisection of my own body". Gandhi, in fact, was the one man who felt sorry for the freedom won under his leadership—the one person who refused to join the celebrations of the dawn of freedom for the country. He was broken-hearted at the sight of millions of India's own sons indulging in the worst forms of manslaughter, loot, arson and rape. He spent the few weeks that preceded the dawn of freedom and the first few months after independence before he was shot in preaching peace and communal amity. The last few months of his life should, in fact, be characterised as tragic—showing Gandhi as a humane person. The bankruptcy of political leadership of the bourgeoisie which he so shrewdly led, made his life a tragedy.

This is not the place for an over-all self critical review of the policies and the practices of the Communist Party of India during the first and second stages of the war and the years that preceded and followed the attainment of independence. Suffice it to say that mistakes were undoubtedly committed and subsequently corrected but, despite all mistakes, the Party emerged as an independent and growing political force, deeply rooted in the working masses in the country and the revolutionary movements abroad. The other forces that were active during the war—particularly before and after the launching of the Quit India struggle—started disintegrating in the years after the country attained freedom.

Picture after the First General Election

The contrast between a growing Communist Party and the disintegrating CSP and the Bose followers on the left became completely clear in the first general elections (1952) under the new Republican Constitution of India. The CSP which entered the electoral contest with the claim of being the strongest political party after the Congress and in a position to replace the latter in several states, met with the biggest fiasco in its history and immediately started disintegrating.

The Congress too received the first big shock in its history after it became the ruling party in the country. The Communist Party, in contrast, came out as the biggest left force in the country and, together with the other left and opposition forces, came very near becoming the ruling party in the two neighbouring states of Travancore-Cochin and Madras and the major opposition in two other states (West Bengal and Hyderabad). At the Centre, too, it became the biggest opposition group in both Houses of Parliament. Maintaining this position at the Centre, the Party became the ruling party in Kerala in the second general elections, though in the meanwhile it suffered a big setback in the newly-formed Andhra Pradesh.

The disintegration of the former Congress Socialist Party after the

1952 general elections was rapid. Its tallest leader, Jayaprakash Naraya left the Party to join the ranks of *bhoodanis* ; so did several others. Mai joined the Congress, while those who were left in the Party joined one another bourgeois opposition party. The merger of the Socialist Par with the Praja Party to form the PSP, the split of the latter, the new Soci list Party (without the "praja") while the Praja Socialist Party continue the merger of the Socialist Party and the PSP again, etc., until in the er all of them joined in the Janata Party deserves a separate and detail study. Suffice it to mention here that the entire course traversed by tl Socialist Party in the post-1952 election period and since then complete proves our contention that the Socialist Party in our country has been torough a failure as any right-wing social democratic party anywhere the world.

Fiasco of Right Wing Social Democracy

One of the reasons why the CSP, which at one time (during the Qu India Movement) appeared to be the most energetic force in the left, rapid disintegrated in the post-Independence years is its basic class and politic outlook. Except for a few individual leaders like Jayaprakash—and th too, only for a short while in the beginning,—the CSP has always be anti-Soviet internationally and anti-Communist internally. The circum tances in which the Quit India struggle came to be launched were extreme favourable for their anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism.

Once the war ended in the victory of the anti-fascist coalition head by the Soviet Union however, their ideological basis got knocked ou Their only hope in the first post-independence years was the credit th had earned in the Quit India Movement and the hope of using it to becon the major left opposition to the Congress. The electoral debacle of 19: proved this claim hollow. Even after that, of course, the Socialists tri to assume the role of a major left opposition party in the country as pa of the Socialist International. With their opportunistic manoeuvres in tl arena of parliamentary politics, the hollowness of their claim to be a maj left force was exposed.

The Communist Party too, faced, after the 1952 elections, a serio situation. An organised group arose in the mid-50s which challenged t Party line of trying to break the monopoly of power enjoyed by the Co gress since the attainment of independence. Defeated in the beginni (at the 1956 Party Congress) when they advocated the openly class coll borationist line, they bided their time and, taking advantage of the Indi China dispute here and the growing split in the international Communi movement, they launched a tirade against those in the Party who stuck the position of opposition to the Congress and succeeded, by stages, creating an artificial majority at the leadership levels in the Party wi which was started the campaign of purging the Party of all "pro-Chin elements.

The Split in the CPI—the Aftermath

Not only did it lead to a clear split in the Party—the formation of the CPI(M) and the CPI—but also to the ganging up of the latter behind the Congress. Although forced, for some time in the 1967-69 period, to join the anti-Congress united front (in the process incidentally, they had no hesitation to become the coalition partner of the Jana Sangh and other reactionary parties in three state governments), they broke with this policy in 1969 and started collaborating with the Congress. This continued for a full decade including the notorious two-year long Emergency. The CPI leader formally headed the Kerala government in that period but the real force was the Congress whose policies had to be loyally carried out by the CPI Chief Minister and his government. Naturally, therefore, the CPI had to share the ignominy which befell the Congress in the 1977 elections that followed the lifting of the Emergency.

The CPI(M) had to face the most difficult period in the years that culminated in the promulgation and continuation of the Emergency. Not only was a part of the Communist Movement (the CPI) a partner of the Congress in the violent attacks on the CPI(M) and other left and militant forces in the country but it had to face the boycott organised by the fraternal Communist and Workers' Parties with very few exceptions. Faced by the semi-fascist terror in West Bengal, the vicious police-goonda atttacks in Kerala, the severe repression wherever the Party or its left allies stood with the fighting people, the Party had to defend its honour. In discharging its major responsibilities, the Party had the supreme confidence that other left forces, including the CPI who had for the time being left the camp of which they are and should be integral parts, they cannot but come back. The CPI(M) therefore, patiently worked. Its hopes in this regard were partly realised when (in 1978) the CPI made its first break with the Congresss and opted for the left and democratic front in which the CPI(M) is the most active force.

Fruitful Period

The last eight years (since the CPI adopted its new line at its Bhatinda Congress) have been fruitful. They have seen the coming together of the CPI(M) and the CPI ; certain other left forces like the RSP and the Forward Bloc were already with the CPI(M). The joint work of all these left forces, together with some other opposition (particularly secular) parties have yielded some positive results. The four all-India conferences of opposition parties held in 1983-84 led to agreements on many issues of burning national importance.

The left parties, including the CPI(M) and the CPI, played a positive role in developing broader unity of action. The authoritarian attacks launched by the Central Government and the ruling party on the autonomy of states were partly rebuffed when the Central Government was forced to stay its hands in Andhra Pradesh.

At still another level, the left parties, together with some c democratic parties, organised a countrywide peace movement, culmina in a Central Convention in Delhi, participated in by the main figh organisations of the working people—the trade unions, the kisan sab the students, the youths, the women's organisations, etc.

While this is a positive development which should hearten all t who are eager to forge the unity of the left developing into the still bro unity of left and secular opposition forces, it will be unwise to be blin the obstacles in the way of the fructification of this idea. The reasc that, despite the broad area of agreements, there is a wide gulf ideol cally and politically separating the two Communist Parties and betw 'them' and other left parties. The CPI(M) considers the CPI as ha committed serious ideological-political mistakes of a right revisic character which manifested itself within the united CPI before the 1 split and between the two Communist Parties since then. The CPI fo part not only denies this allegation but counter-charges the CPI(M) w having pursued a dogmatic and left sectarian line at the dictates of Chinese Communist Party. The difference between the two approache so obvious that no serious activist of either Party can consider it poss to reforge their unity or revive the old United Party.

United Action, No Merger

This however does not negate the big possibilities of united action a wide field. It was in view of these two aspects of the situation that two parties agreed some time back to set up an All-India Co-ordinat Committee. It is however regrettable that, instead of taking all dispu questions to the All-India Co-ordination Committee and sorting them at that level, the CPI leaders insist on CPI(M) toeing the CPI line several issues which, they know, the CPI(M) can never agree to do.

To take one instance, they want the CPI(M) to agree that the (has never committed revisionist or right opportunist mistakes and t theirs is a Marxist-Leninist Party. Some of them go to the extent demanding an outright merger of the two parties since "all the differen between the two parties have been resolved" Everyone who has eyes see will see that this will not work, that what is reasonable and practi will be for the two parties to develop unity of action on issues on wh they agree while deferring the question of mutual differences for a m congenial future. Such an approach will facilitate broader unity of act between the two parties and by them with other left parties.

The Central Issue : Class Struggle

The central issue involved in the question of left unity today is the h toric reality that the political vanguard of the Indian working class is too pitted against parties and organisations some of which are oriented towa the working class but carry with them a lumber-load of non-proletar

ideas and practices. Many other radical parties and organisations are not even formally committed to the ideologies and practices of the working class. The Communist Party—the united party before the split and the CPI(M) since then—has been trying its best to assert the proletarian positions as opposed to alien class positions which are represented and supported by other (petty-bourgeois, bourgeois and even feudal) forces. The continuing class struggle in the realm of ideas, policies and practices is therefore inherent in the situation.

This struggle however should be so conducted as to forge the broadest possible unity of anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, anti monopoly and anti-authoritarian democratic forces. It is with this idea that the CPI(M) gives the perspective of a People's Democratic Front which is necessarily led by the working class. The Left and Democratic Front which the Party advances as an immediate perspective, may not be led by the working class but the working class and its firmest allies—mass of peasantry—play a positive role in the Left and Democratic Front. While trying to develop such a Left and Democratic Front based on a programme which is opposed to the programme of all bourgeois, landlord and petty-bourgeois parties, the CPI(M) strives to develop the broadest possible unity of action on the largest number of issues affecting the life of the people.

To sum up, this overall review of the left movement in the country, the Left and Democratic Front which is in the process of formation now, is a continuation of but qualitatively different—different in its class content and therefore its ideology or world outlook, its political programme, the forms of its militant struggle, mode of revolutionary organisation, etc.—from the left that took shape exactly eight decades ago. While the latter was the path-finder of a new class—the bourgeoisie with its petty-bourgeois following—the present left movement symbolises a growing working class which is finding allies in the other anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, anti-monopoly democratic forces, the mass of peasantry above all.

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*BIPAN CHANDRA**

*Struggle for the Ideological Transformation of the National Congress in the 1930s***

THE Indian national movement was one of the most radical of t anti-imperialist movements outside China. Its ideological developm occurred between the 1880s and the 1940s based on firm anti-imperialis and a programme of social and economic reform. From the beginni the nationalist leadership displayed a certain anti-colonial strength. gradually generated, formed and crystallised into a clear-cut anti-colon ideology. It evolved a clear, scientific and firm understanding and analy of colonialism and spread it widely among the Indian people. Already l the end of the 19th century, the founding fathers of the Indian natior movement had worked out a clear understanding of the three modes colonial surplus extraction : (a) directly through taxation, plunder a large-scale employment of Englishmen ; (b) unequal trade by making Ind a hinterland for the production and sale of raw materials and purchase metropolitan manufactures ; (c) investment of foreign capital. They had fu ther grasped that the essence of colonialism lay in the subordination of tl Indian economy and society as a whole to the needs of the British econon and society, and that India's colonial relationship was not an accident history or a result of political policy but rather sprang from the ve nature and character of British society. This understanding of the compl economic mechanism of modern imperialism was further advanced aft 1918 under the impact of the anti-imperialist mass movements and tl spread of Marxist ideas. Thus the national movement arrived at, and bas itself on, a correct grasp of the central or primary contradiction of coloni India, the contradiction between colonialism and the development ar interests of the Indian people. Moreover, at each stage of its developmen the national leadership linked its political analysis to the analysis colonialism. The national movement was thus placed on a firm, ant colonial ideological basis.

From the beginning, the national leadership emphasised the objecti

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of independent economic development including independence from foreign capital, the creation of an independent capital goods sector based on the latest technology and the foundation of independent science and technology. In the 1930s, the objective of economic planning was widely and universally accepted.

The multi-faceted diversity of the Indian people was fully recognised. The political objective of unifying the Indian people into a nation was to be realised by taking full account of regional, religious, caste, ethnic and linguistic differences. Secularism was made a basic constituent of the nationalist ideology. Similarly, the cultural aspirations of the different linguistic groups were given official recognition. The nationalist movement opposed caste oppression and after 1920 made abolition of untouchability a basic constituent of its programme and political work.

The nationalist movement was fully committed to parliamentary democracy and civil liberties. From the foundation of the Indian National Congress, the nationalist and other mass organisations were organised along democratic lines. From the beginning the nationalists fought for the freedom of the press, speech and association and other civil liberties. It was the national movement which undertook as well as accomplished the task of making parliamentary democracy and civil liberties indigenous.

On the socio-economic plane, the national movement from the beginning adopted a pro-poor orientation and accepted and propagated a programme of reforms that was quite radical by contemporary standards and was basically oriented towards the people. Compulsory primary education, lowering of taxation on the poor and lower middle classes, reduction of salt tax, land revenue and rent, debt relief and provision of cheap credit to the agriculturists, protection of tenant-rights, defence of trade union rights and of the worker's right to a living wage and a shorter working day, higher wages for low-paid employees including the policemen, protection and promotion of village industries, improvement in the social position of women, including their right to work and education and to equal political rights, and reform of the machinery of law and order including the jails, were some of the major reformist demands taken up by the national movement.

Over the years, the nationalists evolved a policy of opposition to imperialism on a world scale, and of expressing and establishing solidarity with the anti-imperialist movements in other parts of the world. On the one hand, from the 1870s, they made an effort to establish solidarity with, and get the support of, the anti-imperialist sections of the British public life and firmly established the notion that the Indians hated imperialism but not the British people ; on the other hand, from 1878 onwards they gave support to the anti-imperialist struggles of the Burmese people, the Afghans, the tribal people of the North West Frontier, the Chinese people at the time of the Sino-Japanese War of 1895 and the I-Ho-Tuan (Boxer) Uprising, the Tibetan people, the people of Egypt and Sudan and the

people of other parts of Africa. The nationalists welcomed the Revolutions of 1905 and 1917. From 1927, the Indian National opposed imperialism in all parts of the world. It also took a anti-fascist stand and gave active support to the anti-fascist stru the people of Ethiopia and Spain and the national liberation strugg Chinese people against Japanese aggression.

The national movement gradually involved a large-scale p tion of the people and their active participation in the moveme task of activising and mobilising the masses was propagated f beginning but was undertaken after 1918. The Gandhian era derived their entire force from the militancy and self-sacrificing spi masses. In particular, the national movement, starting out as the of the patriotic intelligentsia, succeeded in mobilising the youth, th petty bourgeoisie, the urban poor, rural and urban artisans, and la tions of the peasantry.

II

Indian nationalism during 1880-1981 was firmly rooted in a critique of the character of colonial economy, but this critique was same time confined within the perspective of the capitalist chara modern economic development. Thus the national movement was bourgeois ideological hegemony from the begnning. Though this hege penetrated deep and acquired great strength because it held ground f long time during which it was unchallenged, it was not very conci structured on a class basis. It was adopted in the 1880s to 1917 becau the absence or non-availability of any other path of development. C quently, the socialist path did not meet strong intellectual resistance the nationalists, once it emerged as an alternative after the October R lution.

After 1919, when the national movement became a mass moven Gandhi evolved and propagated a different, non-capitalist outlook but socio-economic programme was not capable of challenging the basic h mony of bourgeois ideology; nor did any contemporary see it in that l despite Gandhi's denunciation of modern industrial capitalist civilisatic

III

The impact of the Russian Revolution was felt widely and immedia and a left current developed from early 1920s within the ranks of national movement and soon became a part of its ideological spect Beginning with late 1920s, bourgeois ideological hegemony over national movement was challenged in a serious manner by early Com nist groups, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose, and socia minded individuals. The ideological struggle was intensified in the 19

when these were joined by the Congress Socialist Party and the Royists Nehru's speeches and writings during 1933-36 played a vanguardist role. The Great Depression in the capitalist world, success of the Soviet Five Year Plans, the anti-fascist wave the world over, and the turn to Marxism among many British intellectuals were major positive influences. Leaders of the youth movement of late 1920s and of the volunters of the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) turned to socialism under these influences as also their disenchantment with the Gandhian leadership of the CDM and the substitute for it after 1934 in the form of constructive programme and parliamentary activity Most of the young intellectuals brought up during the 1930s turned towards socialism of one type or another. The rising peasant movements and trade unions increasingly moved left. The Congress Socialists and the Communists after 1935 became active members of the Congress. Nehru stomped the country propagating socialism. The Congress was increasingly radicalised. This radicalisation found expression in the Karachi Resolution in 1931 Nehru's Presidential Address to the Lucknow Congress in early 1936, the radical programme adopted by the Faizpur session of the Congress in late 1936, the adoption of a radical election manifesto for the 1937 elections to provincial assemblies, the formation of the National Planning Committee, the strident stand against war and fascism, and pro peasant agrarian legislation by the Congress Ministries from 1937 to 1939. During this period several nationalist leaders and a large number of revolutionary terrorist leaders made the turn to Marxism, and the Communist Party and the Congress Socialist Party were able to acquire strong or even dominant influence over the Congress organisation in several parts of the country such as Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, U P., and Orissa. The period was so favourable to socialist ideas that it appeared as if the left was on the verge of ideologically transforming the Congress and the national movement in a socialist direciion. But the opportunity was missed, the possibility was aborted. While the left grew in numbers—Nehru and Subhash became presidents of the Congress during 1936-39, the CPI, the CSP and the Royists grew in numbers in geometric proportions—and it was able to develop peasants and workers' organisations, student movement, Progressive Writers' Association and other similar cultural organisations, women's organizations, publish left-wing journals and newspapers, popularise Marxism on a large scale, and develop sympathy and support for the Soviet Union, it failed to establish ideological hegemony over the national movement, that is, to effect a basic transformation of the Congress ideology.

IV

Before the left could make a breakthrough in this respect, it had to be clear on the points on which it demarcated itself from the right and relate these to the issue of ideological hegemony. In other words on

...alist strategy of cooption, cooperating "in some measure with ... apparatus of imperialism" and becoming "partners in the ...nd in the exploitation of our people". It would mean a ...efore imperialism.[3] Others were even less charitable. They ... a hall-mark of the rightist mentality, as the right's repudiation ...rnative to, mass struggle, and as a symbol of the right's desire ...te with imperialism. It represented the class essence of the ...ndlord classes. The proletariat, on the other hand, it was said, ...ed fighting or accepted constitutional phases.

...s not difficult for the other side to show that the left was wrong ...tion, especially regarding the motive behind office acceptance, ...hat was involved were questions of perception and strategy and ...y. Those who favoured office acceptance denied that they were ...nalists; they were equally committed to combating the 1935 ...y argued for office acceptance as short-term tactical step which ...al movement had to take in view of its incapacity at the moment ...the extra-legal mass movement; but they argued that "real work ... the legislatures" and that for achievment of freedom a mass ...was needed. The case for office acceptance was put forward by ...ders with a degree of clarity. J.B. Kriplani, for example, ...n in a revolutionary movement, there may be times of compara- ...sion and inactivity. At such times, whatever programmes are ...e necessarily an appearance of reformatory activity but they are ...ary part of all revolutionary strategy".[4] Nor was the issue of ...volved in the debate. As T. Vishwanathan of Andhra put it: ...cialist comrades, I would say, capture or rejection of offices is ...of socialism, I would ask them to realize that it is a matter of

...-office accep'ance leaders agreed that there were *pitfalls* in- ...at Congressmen in office could give way to wrong tendencies ...on to cooption into the imperialist administrative and consti- ...cture. But the answer, they said, was to fight these wrong ...d not abandon offices themselves. Moreover, the colonial ...was determined to hold elections and implement the provincial ...part of the 1935 Act. Even if the Congress rejected office there ... groups and parties, mostly pro-Government, who were willing ...e office. If the Congress left the field clear to them, they would ...ministries to weaken nationalism and encourage reactionary and ...unal policies and politics. The basic question that the ministerialists ... was whether office acceptance invariably led to cooption by the ...al state or could ministries be used defeat the colonial strategy. ...nswer, in the words of Vishwanathan, was: "Do not look upon ...stries as offices but as centres and ortresses from where British ...mperialism is radiated".[6] In other words, the real question was the manner in which the provincial autonomy was to be worked and not

whether it was to be worked or not.[7] It is also interesting that the left entirely ignored the fact that Gandhi was basically an extra-constitutionalist, till 1937 personally opposed to council entry and office acceptance, and put forward the constructive programme as a non-constitutional alternative to parliamentarianism. For example, he wrote in 1934, even when permitting those who wanted to participate in elections to do so: "I hope that the majority will always remain untouched by the glamour of council work. In its own place, it will be useful. But the Congress will commit suicide if its attention is solely devoted to the legislative work. Swaraj will never come that way. Swaraj can only come through an all-round consciousness of the masses."[8]

(*B*) *Collective Affiliation*: A second issue picked up by the left for struggle and polemic against the right wing, especially during 1935-36, was that of collective affiliation. Nehru proposed the widening of the mass base of the Congress and its identification with the interests of the masses by the collective affiliation to it of the workers' and peasants' organizations. While the objective was sound, the method was surely spurious and manipulative. The notion that the masses could be brought into the Congress and its base could be radicalized only via affiliation of their class organisations was based on three assumptions: (a) that the Congress was a bourgeois organization and should have united front with workers' and peasants' organizations; (b) that the Congress was not a popular mass organization or movement but a united front of separately organized parties and classes which contended with each other for control over it; or (c) that the masses could not be brought into the Congress through direct membership of the organization. The question was whether the Congress as a popular organization-movement could be better radicalized through collective affiliation or through ideological-political work among the masses in the Congress and by bringing the radicalised masses into the Congress. In fact, could a popular mass organization exist by permitting such collective affiliation? It seems that the left did not realise at the time that the Congress was not a conclave of parties and class organizations, a sort of body coordinating existing like-minded organisations, such as the Popular Front of France or Communist-Kuomintang alliance of China, but a historically developed mass organization leading the freedom struggle.

The right had little difficulty in showing that perhaps collective affiliation was put forward as an instrument for changing the balance of political and ideological forces inside the Congress in an artificial manner, as a sort of *coup d'etat*, by the left because it did not have the political support in the movement to do it any other way. In any case there was nothing right wing about opposition to this demand. Its rejection did not debar the left in any way from organizing workers and peasants in their own class organizations or enrolling the workers and peasants into the Congress or carry on socialist propaganda and education within the

Congress, or for fighting for greater, and wherever possible majority, representation in the leadership bodies of the Congress. In fact, the left was able to do so without hinderance and even successfully in Kerala and to a certain extent in Bengal, Orissa, U.P. and Andhra. On the other hand, in a situation where kisan sabhas and trade unions were poorly organized in terms of properly enrolled membership, etc., even while acting as fighting organs of class struggle at the economic plane, any collective affiliation would surely have opened the floodgates of bogus membership and organizational manifestation.[8a]

(*C*) *Constituent Assembly* : From 1935 onwards, the left rightly regarded the slogan of a Constituent Assembly, elected on the basis of adult franchise, to frame the constitution of free India as a revolutionary slogan. But the right dominated Congress had already put forth the slogan at Patna in June 1934 simultaneously with the decision to enter the legislative councils. The slogan was vigorously campaigned for later by the entire Congress.

(*D*) *Non-Violence :* A fourth major issue that was constantly posed by the left was that of violence vs. non-violence. Instead of posing the question of non-violence in terms of its usefulness as a form of struggle and political mobilisation in the specific conditions of colonial India, it was projected in terms of class essence and abstract criteria on the assumption that methods of struggle have class essences. Non-violent struggle was seen to be a form of struggle which was in essence 'bourgeois-landlord', and to it was counterposed the 'proletarian technique of mass action'.[9] The communists and socialists regularly demanded revolutionary action which was defined, in the ultimate, as violence in general and armed insurrection in particular. The communists in particular made methods of struggle basic constituents of a strategic perspective, and as revolutioary or non-revolutionary in themselves They often defined a strategy of struggle in terms of methods of struggle.

Non-violence was one issue on which Nehru and gradually elements of CSP came to terms with Gandhi. The communists, on the other hand, not only made non-violence one of the points of demarcation from Gandhi's leadership and the existing national movement but made it one of the grounds for total opposition to Gandhi.

(*E*) *Militancy* : The left also had a tendency to demarcate itself from the right on the basis of political militancy, especially verbal militancy. It was mostly on this basis that election battle for the Congress presidentship in 1939 and the consequent split at Tripuri was defined as struggle between left and right. Thus a question of strategy and of perception of people's readiness to struggle and the manner in which struggle should be started and fought was wrongly posed as an issue of left vs. right. Similarly, during 1939-41 and 1945-47, militancy was taken to define left-rightness, while in reality, as 1942 showed, this was a wrong point of demarcation.

(*F*) *The Question of Strategy*: There was a crucial difference bet ween the strategy adopted by Gandhi from 1919 to 1947 and the strateg advocated virtually unanimously by the left during 1933-37. Under th Gandhian strategy, which may be described as Struggle-Truce-Struggl (S-T-S), phases of a vigorous extra-legal mass movement and open con frontation with colonial authority alternate with phases during whicl direct confrontation is withdrawn, political concessions or reforms, if any wrested from the colonial regime, are willy-nilly worked and silent politi cal work carried on among the masses within the existing legal framework which, in turn, provides scope for such work. Both phases of the move ment are to be utilised, each in its own way, to undermine the twin ideo logical notions on which the colonial regime rested—that British rul benefits Indians and that it is too powerful to be challenged and over thrown—and to recruit and train cadre and to build up the people' capacity to struggle. The entire political process of S-T-S was an upwar spiralling one, which also assumed that the freedom struggle would pas through several stages, ending with the transfer of power by the colonia regime itself.

The alternative left strategy was never put forward as such except a a carping critique of the Gandhian leadership; nor unlike the Gandhia leadership did the left ever put its strategy into practice, the groun offered being the relative weakness of the left. For a short period, fron 1933 to 1937, Nehru gave adherence to the left strategy and also gave it certain cogency and coherence.

The left believed that the national movement should have a perma nent mass and extra-legal confrontation and conflict with imperialism til it was overthrown. The movement might suffer setbacks and phases o upswing and downswing but these should not lead to a passive phas where open confrontation is withdrawn, some of the colonial institution worked, and energy diverted to the non-political and non-class construc tive programme. In the words of Nehru, the Congress must maintain "a aggressive direct action policy". The nationalist mass struggle mus become perpetual and could go forward only through unconstitutional an illegal means. Once the masses enter and take over a movement, no half way house is left. The left strategy may be characterised as Struggle Victory (S-V). While the Gandhian strategy was based on the assumptio that a mass movement could not be carried on for a prolonged period,– that the broad masses, especially the landowning peasants could not sus tain a mass movement for very long—and periods of rest and consolida tion must intervene, the left assumed that masses once aroused never tir and were ready to continue fighting continuously, advancing from lower t higher forms of struggle ending with armed insurrection, till victory wa won.

The left did not, however, at any stage believe that the Gandhia movement had a strategy. Consequently, it neither made an effort t

understand this strategy, nor did it subject it to a serious critique from the perspective of an alternative strategy. No responsible leadership anywhere would permit a movement it leads to operate outside the parameters of its broad strategy. Hence an effective critique of Gandhian leadership and its tactics at any specific period of time or its stand on particular issues could be made only if the critique extended to the Gandhian strategy. Then alone could its strong and weak points have been understood and its historical effectivity seriously challenged or accepted.

Denying or failing to see any strategic perspective or conception to the dominant leadership of the Congress, the left critique of the leadership was based on the assigning of bourgeois class essence to it and the movement and organization it led. This then led the left to criticise this leadership, especially Gandhi, in terms of not wanting mass struggle, getting frightened of mass upsurge especially when it became or tended to become "revolutionary", that is, violent, putting breaks on the activity of the masses, curbing mass struggle, etc. Since the assumption was that the masses were always ready for struggle, and that the leadership had limitless human resources at its command, and that therefore all that was needed was for the leadership, which was trusted by the people, to summon them for struggle, any withdrawal or slackening of the movement or failure to raise it to 'higher forms' of struggle, or effort to confine it within non-violent limits was portrayed by the left, especially the communists, as betrayal under the pressure of bourgeoisie and landlords, who felt threatened, or because of its class essence.

The fact was that the left had hardly any conception of hegemonic struggle, or of what Gramsci described as a war of position, or even more important, of a struggle which combined a war of movement (Satyagraha phase) with a war of position (non-Satyagraha or passive phase) when the hegemony of the ruling classes is eroded inch by inch and in every area of life. So far as the left was concerned there existed only two political choices in the situation. In the words of R. Palme Dutt : "It is evident that two opposing conceptions of the campaign were possible, according to the conception of the aim. Either it was to be a decisive struggle of all the forces of the Indian people for the ending of British rule and the establishment of complete independence ('A Fight to the Finish' in the terms of the official Congress History's chapter-heading for the struggle), or it was intended to be a limited and regulated demonstration of mass pressure with a view to securing better terms and concessions from British rule."[11]

Failing to understand the strategy of S-T-S, the left never raised the questions whether it was suited to the Indian political reality, including the semi-hegemonic, semi-suppressive character of the colonial state, whether a mass movement which involves millions of people in a continent-size country could follow any other strategy, or more generally, were Gandhi's technique and forms of struggle, for example, non-violence, law-breaking Satyagraha, constructive work, emphasis on political morality, open-func-

tioning, mere matters of principle and/or tactics or were they geared a wider strategy designed for change in state power under semi-democra and semi-civilized rule. And were the passive phases periods of bargain with imperialism and periods of political weakness or were they essen to the strategy of anti-imperialist struggle in terms of rest, consolidati and preparation for another phase of mass struggle ? Did withdrawal an active civil disobedience movement mean betrayal of the struggle or v Gandhi's claim right that "suspension of civil disobedience does not me suspension of war"[12] and that it meant carrying on the war by otl means ?

Because of the failure to understand the S-T-S strategy and the r of the periods of truce or passive phases, the left also failed to understa and therefore meaningfully criticise the role of constructive work. It v branded in a rather simple manner as "reactionary" simply because it not explicitly take up the political and economic demands of the masses.

(G) *Class Adjustment* : A very important ground for the strong l attack on the right was because of the left's failure to fully and prope understand the role of class struggle within Indian society in the context colonialism or the role of inner contradictions within Indian society vis vis the primary contradiction between colonialism and the Indian peo as a whole.

The left rightly emphasized the organization of the workers a peasants in their class organizations such as trade unions and kisan sabl and the necessity of fighting for their class demands and the organizati of popular struggles around them. It also recognized in theory or in programmatic documents the primacy of the primary contradiction. But did not in practice, in its policies, and even in its programmatic pr nouncements know how to correlate the two, how to combine class stru gles with the primary contradiction, that is, how to wage class strugg within the camp of the people in a non-antagonistic manner.

By any reckoning, the inner class contradictions within coloni society had to be fully recognized and not ignored and overlooked as t right often did. At the same time, they had to be seen as secondary and therefore subordinated to, the primary contradiction. While t right had to be opposed when it propagated that internal contradicti should be overlooked and all class struggle suspended for the duration the national liberation struggle, the left had to see the internal contradi tions as contradictions within the camp of the colonial people ; and cla struggles based on them had to be fought in a non-antagonistic fashio Treating the inner contradictions as secondary or in a non-antagonist manner as being within the camp of the people would mean not pushi class struggles within Indian society to their limits. *It would mean maki class adjustments among the mutually hostile Indian social classes.* T objective of class struggles had to be to create a new balance of class forc and class gains at the point of production and not the overthrow

expropriation of the Indian exploiter class. The attempt was to be to gain an improved socio-economic environment for the working people and not their liberation from class exploitation. In other words, the right was to be criticised and opposed when it objected to organization of the exploited classes or class struggles as mass movements around their class demands but not when it proposed class adjustment and confining of class struggles within the parameters of broad unity within all sections of the Indian people. The left tended to do the very opposite.

Interestingly, the right agreed at Karachi in 1931 and after, to the organization of the Indian masses into their various class organizations such as trade unions and kisan sabhas—it even organized them in its own way especially when facing the colonial state as an employer, as in the railways or foreign enterprises. It also did not object to struggles around the class demands of the workers and peasants even when internal exploiters were involved[14]. But it precisely said that class struggles should be adjusted and fought for in a nonantagonistic manner and therefore without physical violence against the internal exploiters or without being pushed to the extreme of demanding their liquidation as a class. Consequently, it agreed, though often under pressure of the left, to the embodiment of radical, though adjusted, class demands—demands on this side of the total liquidation of class exploitation and exploiters—within the Congress programme at Karachi and Faizpur and in the Flection Manifesto of 1937. It also agreed to have supporters of class struggles as Presidents for 1936 to 1938 and as members of the Working Committee[15].

In this regard, one cannot help but notice the complete contrast between the politics of the left in India and in China. In India the left gave the slogan of fighting inside the Congress against the policy of "class—collaboration" (thus making the multi-class organization an instrument of class struggle!) and class adjustment. The All India Kisan Sabha, for example passed a resolution in March 1938 strongly condemning 'the theory of class collaboration, i.e , the principle that the interest of the exploited classes can be adjusted and reconciled within the framework of the present society.' The resolution further stated: "This Sabha is convinced that such collaboration even on the excuse that the anti-imperialist struggle demands such a policy for the sake of the so-called national unity, can result only in perpetuation of economic enslavement and checking the growth of the struggle of Swaraj for the masses...This Sabha deems its duty to carry on a relentless fight against the advocacy and propagation of such a theory...." Instead of seeing class adjustment as a necessary weapon in the anti-imperialist struggle, the Sabha saw it as a policy that would end "ultimately in a settlement between the traditional exploiters of the masses and imperialism for a more stable and intensive exploitation of the masses."[16]

The task of integrating the anti-imperialist struggle with class demands or class struggles was accomplished in a very different manner by the Chinese and the Vietnamese commuinst parties in the 1930s. In the

face of the imperialist enemy, or a situation in which the entire society, irrespective of class divisions, faced a common colonial or colonising enemy, class struggle was to be adjusted, with all mutually hostile classes within the colonial or semi-colonial society making concessions to one another. The classical Marxist position in this respect though initiated by Marx and Engels[17], was fully developed by Mao Ze Dong during the anti-Japanese, struggle of the Chinese people.[18]

> To subordinate the class straggle to the present national struggle to resist Japan—that is the fundamental principle of the united front... In a nation which is struggling against a foreign foe, the class struggle assumes the form of national struggle, a form indicating the consistency of the two. On the one hand, the economic and political demands of the classes during the historical period of national struggle should be based on the condition of not disrupting the cooperation of these cl sses; on the other, all the demands of class struggle should start from the requirements of the national struggle.

And again:[19]

> It is a settled principle that in the anti-Japanese War everything must be subordinated to he interests of resistance to Japan. Therefore the interests of the class struggle must not conflict with, but be subordinated to, the interests of the War of Resistance. But the classes and class struggle do exit....*We do not deny the class struggle, but adjust it*...In order to unite against Japan we should carry out a suitable policy that can adjust the class relations.

Mao also explained what he meant by class adjustment:

> The workers should demand that the factory owners improve their material conditions, but at the same time they should work hard in order to facilitate resistance to Japan; the landlords should reduce rent and interest, but at the same time the peasants should pay rent and interest to the landlords and unite with them against foreign aggression.

The Vietnamese communists too practised and wrote about class adjustment in the same fashion.[20a] Interestingly enough, the Communist Party of India too practised class adjustment during the period of the People's War once they located the primary contradiction in the antifascist struggle on a world scale.[20b] Moreover, unlike Mao and the Chinese Communist Party, the CPI adjusted the class struggle in an empiricist fashion without theorising it in terms of relation between primary and secondary contradiction or antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions. We may also note that Sahajanand Saraswati who would not give an iota of concession to or make any accommodation with the Congress Ministry during 1937-39 was openly asking the peasants not to struggle against the zamindars during 1942-44.

Thus the point of contention had to be not class adjustment but the terms on which it was to be made and the manner in which class struggle

was provided for within the parameters of colonial society and the anti-imperialist struggle

Then, there was specific demand for the abolition of landlordism without compensation. The right wing was, again wrongly, defined as all those who opposed this demand. In semi-colonial countries, where state power is shared or even largely wielded by domestic classes, mainly landlords and compradors, the political objectives of the struggle alternate. Sometimes the struggle against feudalism and for liquidation of landlordism becomes primary because while remaining an enemy colonialism *is not* and *cannot* become the target of the immediate and main political movement for arousal of the people and struggle for state power. Examples are Chinese struggle from 1922 to 1934, whose direct targets were the warlords with their social base among the landlords, and the Civil War, 1946-49, whose task was the overthrow of Chiang Kai-Shek's power. In both cases agrarian revolution took the centre of the stage. On the other hand, when colonialism directly threatens or rules, the colonial state or colonial state-to-be become the immediate targets of mass mobilization and the struggle for abolition of landlordism is either not taken up or abandoned. This was the case in China in 1918-19 and 1937-1945 and in Vietnam after 1939.

In India colonialism ruled directly; none of the Indian social classes shared in state power. Therefore the slogan of complete liquidation of landlordism or agrarian revolution was invalid throughout. The radical demands could only be for the mitigation of its harsh aspects. The bourgeois democratic stage of revolution was directed against feudalism in Europe; in India it had to be directed against colonialism. The mixing up of anti-colonial and the agrarian revolution here was a mixing up of recipes, not good for the health of the national movement or the left. Furthermore, class adjustment was not to be a fixed position. It would be a moving point on a wide spectrum. As the national movement advanced class organization and class and anti-colonial consciousness of the working people advanced, and as the national movement shifted leftwards, the level of class adjustment would also shift 'leftwards' towards positions more favourable to the working people. This is what happened in concrete practice. For example, the left-led kisan sabhas did not anywhere, in British India, wage an actual mass struggle for the abolition of landlordism. In Kerala, for example, the peasant struggle started with demands for abolition of *begar* and social oppression, moved on to demand for abolition of illegal cesses, and advanced to fight for permanent tenancy and no ejection. Similarly, the most advanced peasant struggle of pre-independence British India, the *Tebhaga*, was for reduction of rent and not its abolition. The slogan of land to the tiller remained an annual resolution of kisan sabha conferences and did not become, at any stage, a concrete slogan for peasant mobilization. It is also interesting that as we have pointed out earlier, over the years, starting with 1931, the right

agreed to go quite far vis-a-vis londlordism (and usury), short of *liquidation. And in 1945, the Congress Working Committee* accepted, at *the level of a resolution, the policy of abolition of* all intermediaries between the state and the actual cultivators

(*H*) *Compromise with Imperialism*: Above all, all the wrong aspects on which the left demarcated itself from the right combined and culminated in the view that the right wanted "compromise with" and "surrender to" imperialism. This was the most serious error of them all, for the right-wingness of the right was not to be and could not be located in its approach towards imperialism. Instead of seeing all the issues discussed above or the different positions taken up by sections of national leadership on them as aspects of differing anti-imperialist strategies, or of tactics based on differing perceptions of the political situation, balance of political forces, nature and position of the enemy, the state and level of people's politicisation and preparedness to struggle, and the role of different political groups and social classes, the left regarded them as barometers of the degree of anti-imperialism of different political trends within the national movement. The right's positions on these issues were seen as aspects of the proclivity of the bourgeoisie and therefore the dominant Congress leadership (Congress leadership being always equal to the bourgeoisie) to bargain, collaborate and compromise with and surrender to imperialism. Any suppleness in negotiations, any change in tactics of frontal confrontation, etc., in the extremely complex struggle against a semi-hegemonic and politically subtle enemy with great deal of political resources at its command was seen as betrayal of the movement.

Consequently, the consistent anti-imperialism of the national movement and its dominant leadership was missed, and the left waged a fight with the right on an issue and a premise which guaranteed its isolation from the mass of the people. After all, who, except those intoxicated with their own words, would believe that Gandhi or Sardar Patel or Maulana Azad were soft towards imperialism, not to speak of being betrayers of nationalism. The right, on the other hand, once again scored. It did not question the patriotism of the left and insisted on unity of all patriotic trends, left or right The CSP and CPI both were guilty of this blunder during the 1930s. Nehru escaped isolation from the people because, despite his sharing of many of the left positions on other issues, he did not, except for a brief period, question the total anti-imperialist commitment of Gandhi and the right wing of the Congress. The CSP and communists too survived and grew after 1935 because in most parts of the country, especially in Andhra, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, where they were led by P. Sundarayya, they came before the people as Congressmen and as builders of the Congress.

The most vulgar form in which the theory of the right's tendency to compromise with imperialism was put was by Subhash Bose during and after his election to the presidentship of the Congress. During the

campaign, Bose accused the rightist majority of the Working Committee of working for a compromise with the Government on the question of federation having even drawn up a list of prospective central ministers, and therefore of not wanting a leftist—himself—as the president of the Congress. The best comment on this style of distinguishing the right from the left was made by Jawaharlal Nehru in a letter to Subhash Bose, dated 4 February 1939:[21]

> I do not know who you consider a Leftist and who a Rightist. The way these worlds were used by you in your statements during the presidential contest seemed to imply that Gandhi and those who are considered as his group in the W.C. are the Rightist leaders. Their opponents, whoever they might be, are the Leftists. That seems to me an entirely wrong description. It seems to me that many of the so-called Leftists are more Right than the so-called Rightists. Strong language and a capacity to criticise and attack the old Congress leadership is not a test of leftism in politics... . I think the use of the words Left and Right has been generally wholly wrong and confusing. If instead of these words we talked about policies it would be far better. What policy do you stand for? Anti-Federation, well and good. I think that the great majority of the members of the W.C. stand for that and it is not fair to hint at their weakness in this respect.

Even the CSP and the Communist Party shied away from supporting Subhash Bose at Tripuri in March 1939 Explaining its position, the CPI declared that the interests of the anti-imperialist struggle "demanded not the *exclusive* leadership of one wing but a *united* leadership under the guidance of Gandhi".[22] But this was pragmatism. No theoretical or political lessons were drawn from the episode. The CPI continued to criticise the Congress Ministries not on grounds of ideology or policy weaknesses or even class bias but because the Congress leadership, representing the upper classes, and out of the fear of the advancing working class and peasant movements, was increasingly compromising, cooperating and collaborating with imperialism and working the 1935 Act in accord with British plans and policies and as organs of imperialist administration.

This line of critique by the left had full play during 1939-41 and culminated in 1947-48 when the achievement of freedom in 1947 was portrayed as false freedom (*Yeh Azadi Jhooti Hai*) and as capitulation of the national leadership before imperialism because of its fear of the revolutionary movement of the post-war years.

IV

If the Congress right was nationalist first and right wing later, where was its right wing character to be located. In our view, it was to be located in its ideology or in its social vision of a free India. The Congress right continued to accept the confines of a bourgeois perspective of social

development. Apart from the ideological realm, its differences with the left lay in the social, class content of the Congress programme, in the nature of the socio-economic structure of free India, and on the question of class struggle. Interestingly, on the question of social content of the movement most of the right-wing leaders were willing to go quite far in accommodating the left so long as the changes were within the parameters of class adjustment and peaceful change. The reason why most of them could cooperate first with Nehru and then with the Congress Socialists and adopt a non-hostile attitude to the communists was because they were not reactionary in the way the left defined them but were more akin to the radical democrats of 19th century Europe or contemporary China and other countries of Asia. In other words, they were bourgeois in their outlook but reformistically or radically so.

This understanding of the right would once again indicate that the main edge of the left's struggle vis-a-vis the right had to be at the levels of ideology, a visibly greater capacity to suffer, sacrifice and work in the national movement, and the organization of workers, peasants, the youth, petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia, without pitting their organizations against the Congress. In fact, the rapid growth of the left in the 1930s was due more than any other factor to the ideological attraction of socialism and Marxism. Another major factor was the reputation that the leftists acquired as the most hard working devoted and sacrificing of the anti-imperialist fighters.

The primacy of ideological struggle under colonial conditions so far as the left was concerned had another aspect. Since no anti-colonial movement could take up the task of the abolition of private property, the socialist project could not be given a programmatic shape except in the ideological realm. So long as colonial rule persisted, there could be no struggle for socialism, only struggle for organization of the working people and for the amelioration of their social condition, which meant not only economic amelioration but also social amelioration around women's question, caste and secularism, and for socialist ideology and the ideological transformation of the national liberation struggle. The heart of right wing was, for example the ideology at the back of class adjustment and the terms of class adjustment and not the notion of adjustment itself. But waging ideological struggle was an extremely difficult and complex task requiring a deep understanding of the Indian social reality and culture, on the one had, and of Marxism on the other. The task was made even more difficult because the struggle had to be waged in a non-antagonistic fashion, that is from within the camp of the people. The left also found the task difficult because of its shallow, easily acquired Marxism—most of its leaders had not themselves gone through the prolonged process of acquisition of the new ideology—especially when it was faced with the extremely complex, contradictory, and socially radical ideologies embodied in Gandhism and radical democracy. Precisely because the right readily accommodated

left demands, policies and progamme the left found it difficult to contenc with the right and with Gandhism in ideological terms. It therefore tool recourse to the easier, though politically costly, course of defining the right as soft towards imperialism. Similarly, unable to grasp the Gandhian strategy and the consequent capacity of Gandhi to politically arouse and mobilise the people, the left misrepresented the struggle over strategies in terms of their own uncompromising anti-imperialism and compromising, half-hearted anti-imperialism of Gandhi and the right wing.

A popular mass movement, especially in colonial conditions, had to be open-ended, without definite hegemony or class character. It had to be a multi-class movement rather than a mere alliance of classes. It could not be, nor was, movement of the bourgeoisie, national or otherwise. Nationalism, or anti-imperialism, in a colony did not represent only the ideology of the bourgeoisie or express only the bourgeoisie's contradiction with imperialism. It represented the entire colonial society's contradiction with imperialism. The question here was, would one be a nationalist from the bourgeois perspective of social development or from the socialist point of view. Another way of looking at the reality was to grasp that the task in India was not that of the working class or the left groups and parties supporting bourgeois nationalism because of its historically progressive character, but that of waging the nationalist struggle because it was the struggle of the Indian people, including that of the working class.

The Indian national movement had from the beginning, even when it accepted the bourgeois pattern of social development as its objective, two very important positive features. One was its basic orientation towards the people and acceptance of the notion that politics must be based on the masses who must be politicised, activised and brought into politics. The other was its ideological open-endedness ; it was open to competition and contention by different ideological currents. Even in the Gandhian era only two conditions were laid down for becoming a part of the Congress anti-imperialism and non-violence as a tactic or policy (not necessarily as a principle). Even those ideological currents were permitted to continue which were committed to capturing or transforming the Congress or which openly stood out as alternatives to it. The top leadership of the movement did not at any stage, from 1870 onwards, give way to its contemporary right-wing ideologies. The Revolution of 1917 was given warm welcome. The Soviet Union was admired and supported throughout. The left cultural currents of Europe, Asia and Americas had an immediate impact. For example, Gorky's *Mother* was translated in Indian languages by Congressmen in the late 1920s and early 1930s and was one of the most widely read books of the time. The Congress supported anti-imperialist movements irrespective of the political colour of their leadership. Marxism found a ready welcome and no strong anti-Marxist intellectual current developed in the nationalist ranks till 1947. Left leaders and groups and parties were not subjected to isolation. Interestingly, at no stage did a

break in the Congress occur over ideology. In other words, the Indi national movement and Indian National Congress, the organization whi led it, were quite open to transformation towards a socialist perspective.

V

Even in terms of ideological struggle and transformation there exi ed scope for wrong understanding and approach. Even in its ideologi practice, the left made a major error because it failed to understand t specific historical context and character of the Indian national moveme While correctly noting the bourgeois social developmental perspecti and ideology of a large part of its leadership, it failed to see the sign cance of the increasingly radical socio economic-political programme a policies of the movement and the intermediate, popular ideological po tions of Gandhi and many other segments of the nationalist leadersh As pointed out earlier, the left did not systematically analyse or explain even ask as to what were the components of the ideology of what th described as the right.[23]

Above all, Gandhi was not only put in the right-wing camp, es cially by the communists, but was even seen as the ideological founta head of the right. But Gandhi could be put in the right wing only if t assumption was that any one who did not accept Marxism was a righti or that if an ideology was not socialist it had to be bourgeois, or that i movement was not under socialist ideological hegemony it must be unc bourgeois or bourgeois-landlord hegemony. Thus, it is correct that Ganc did not accept class analysis of society, class struggle and socialism Marxists would define it. He was not a socialist in the scientific sense the term. But he was committed to basic changes in the existing soc order and judging from his overall ideological framework and his stand economic, social and political issues during the 1930s, he was not a bo geois or feudal either. He was certainly not committed to the preser tion of private property.[24] His stand favouring nationalization of lar scale industries, on exploitation inherent in capitalism and landlordism, land to the tiller, against untouchability, on civil liberties, and on ma other issues created constant openings for any pro-poor programn policies and *ideology* and therefore for cooperation between Gandhi a Gandhians and the left. Nehru and later, after 1944, the Congress Soc lists did take note of this aspect of Gandhism. But the communists did n raise the important question : To what extent was Gandhi's overall soc ideology with its orientation towards the lowly, the exploited and t down-trodden open to transformation in a socialist direction though n by him but by socialists ? In other words, were the Marxists to oppo him and expose him or was it possible for them to interact with Gand his thought and the Gandhian cadre and through ideological strugg though in a non-antagonistic manner, to shape the national movement

socialist direction ? The communists and the CSP of the 1930s did not ise this question ; they did not even make a serious study of what Gandhi id Gandhism were by analysing their writings or their social practices. istead, they decided to see in Gandhi a total rival rather than an ally. hey opted for the line of regarding him as the *main hurdle* to the growth socialist ideas and movement and therefore of isolating him from the dical-minded youth, a task in which they were quite successful but at the st of losing all chances of hegemonising the national movement as a iole They showed intense hostility to Gandhi, non-violence, construc-e programme, his tactical withdrawal of the movements, etc., and con-ntrated on 'exposing' them. The tactical line adopted was to unite all e left-wing forces in a concerted attack on Gandhi and the right.[25] And ybody on the left who put forward a different view, for example, Nehru, is not spared, especially during 1940-41.

Similarly, the overwhelming majority of the Congress cadre were not cialists or Marxists but were not ideologically right wing either. In fact, roughout the 1920s and 1930s the area of popular politics based on wide pular demands and issues was growing and the majority of the nationa- cadre were getting attracted to socialism and socialist ideas. But cause of the left's treatment of Gandhi and the Gandhians as hostile ments and as the agents of the upper classes, and by making leftism ciminus with anti-Gandhism, vast mass of these radically-oriented lre were pushed away. They remained apathetic to Marxism and con-ued to remain under bourgeois ideological hegemony. A vast number of tential allies and supporters of socialism were lost.

VI

In the end, we may suggest that in the context of a popular anti-onial movement, the socialist alternative had to be posed not in terms its leadership by the working class or by a working class party but in ological terms, that is, as a moral and intellectual and social develop-ntal alternative and not a class alternative. A major task of the left s to give Indian nationalism a new socialist ideological orientation and struggle to create alternatives to the existing national movement or to ndhi's leadership. Nehru, in a way, had an instinctive grasp of the rect approach in this respect. Throughout the 1930s, he pointed to the lequacy of the existing nationalist ideology and the hegemony of the pertied classes over it, and stressed the need to inculcate a new socia- or Marxist ideology, which would enable the people to study their ial condition scientifically, to give the Congress a new orientation, and vin over the others in the Congress to the new ways of thought. Several pters of his Autobiography, written during 1934-35, were an ideological emic against Gandhi but couched in a mild, friendly, even reverential e. At the same time he defended the Congress from hostile criticism

from the left, stressing and analyzing the possibilities of its transformati(in a socialist direction.

1. The entire wrong approach of the left over the years is codified in R. Palı Dutt's work, *India Today*, 1948 edition.
2. The left saw the earlier Swarajist Phase of 1924-29 as cooperation with imper lism and the result of vacillations of the bourgeoisie.
3. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Selected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 185-86.
4. J.B Kriplani, speech at Lucknow Congress, in A.M. and S.G. Zaidi, edito *The Encyclopaedia of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. 1.10, p. 48.
5. *Ibid*, p. 42.
6. *Ibid*, p. 142.
7. The decision of 1934 to withdraw a movement which had declined and to go for elections closely resembled the 1951 decision of the CPI to withdraw t call for overthrow of the Government and to go in for elections. Similarly, t decision to accept office in 1937 was similar to the Communist decision to for ministries in Kerala in 1957, 1967, 1969 and 1977 and in West Bengal in 19(1969 and 1977 and in Tripura in 1977. But it is surprising that despite tl later practice, almost all left-wing historians continue to describe the advoca of council-entry in 1934 and office acceptance in 1937 as right-wing policies decisions.
8. *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 58,

8. (a) Even when direct membership was involved, the Congrese failed to avo these two evils, especially after 1937. Trade unions till this day suffer from tl aspect and no mechanism has been evolved so far to avoid it when it comes measuring the relative strength of various trade union centres. Consequentl we have the spectacle of the AITUC being relegated to a position far belc that of the INTUC and the BMS.

9 Just as in recent years all talk of peaceful coexistence or settlement of strugg between the socialist bloc and the imperialist bloc has been portrayed revisionist concession to bourgeois outlook. Same is the case with the politic line of parliamentary road to power adopted by Italy, Great Britain, etc. Tl point of course is that these may be wrong politically, but they are not manife tations of a right wing or bourgeois-landlord essence.

10. This lack of understanding is clearly revealed in R. Palme Dutt's writing (the one hand, he says "that nothing whatever had been gained" as a result the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, and in fact, "all the aims of complete independen and no compromise with imperialism, so loudly proclaimed at Lahore, h: gone up in smoke" : and similarly the 1932-34 struggle ended with a fiasco. C the other hand, he writes : "The unhappy final ending of the great wave struggle of 1930-34 should not blind us for a moment to its epic achievement. Within two years, after all those heavy blows, the national movement w advancing again, stronger than ever. The struggle helped to forge and awak a new and greater national unity, self-confidence, pride and determination Dutt is utterly unaware that the 'epic achievement' was related to the strate of the struggle ; the strategy was precisely designed to achieve this result. Th is what hegemonic struggle is all about.
    R.P. Dutt, *op cit.*, pp. 348, 353-55.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 339.
12. *Collected Works*, Vol. 67, p. 226.
13. The post independence history of India, as so nearly 100 years of We

European and U.S. history, show that one of the most difficult but necessary political tasks is to provide political activity to the cadre as also the people during the inevitable intervals between mass movements. In fact, failure to provide meaningful activity during these intervals has led to these intervals being so prolonged that mass struggles appear to be short intervals between long periods of passive phases.

l. For example, in Gujarat, Sardar Patel and others supported Halpatis—bonded labourers—to fight against bondage. In 1931, Sardar Patel as president of the Congress and Gandhi sanctioned the no-rent campaign in U P.

5 These steps have often been seen as right manoeuvres or the right's efforts to coopt or bamboozle the left A better explanation is that the right recognized the need to build a wider popular movement based on class adjustment, etc. *c.f.* Francine Frankal, *India's Political Economy 1947-77*, pp. 35.

5. N.G. Ranga, *Kisan Handbook*, p. 71.

7. *Ireland and the Irish Question*, Moscow, 1971.

8. Dong, Mao Ze, *Selected Works*, Vol. Two, London, 1954, p. 264.

). *Ibid.*, p. 250. Emphasis added.

). *Ibid* , p. 263.

)(a). For details of their stand as also Mao Ze Dong's, see Bhagwan Josh 'Ministries and the Left", Mimeo.

)(b). This is what P.C. Joshi, then General Secretary of the CPI wrote to Gandhi in 1945 regarding the party's class struggle policy during the War. "We gave up our strike policy because we considered it anti-national in the conditions of the day .That we successfully prevented the Indian working class from resorting to strikes even in a period of their worsening national conditions is the measure not only of our influence over it but its capicity to *understand* national interesets as its own. *Correspondence Between Mahatma Gandhi and P C. Joshi*, p. 12.

l. Jawaharlal Nehru, *A Bunch of Old Letters*, Bombay, p. 309.

2. *National Front*, 19 March 1939.

3. As pointed out earlier, the Congress right did not share any of the attributes of European, or Arab, or Latin American, or Chinese or Japanese right wing of the 1920s and 1930s. Nor did it have much in common with what was known as the right in Europe in 19th century (Guizet, Theirs, Bismark, British Tories or even Liberals, and so on)

4. Gandhi's theory of trusteesphip, opposite of Marxism, was not used by Gandhi to justify the existing pattern of property relationships and was constantly developed by Gandhi and Gandhians in a more radical direction

5. There were a few contrary voi es See, for example, S.G. Sardesai in *National Front*, 30 April 1939. The hostility to Gandhi was codified in R. Palme Dutt's *India Today* and has, on the whole, held sway since then. See, for example : Gandhi "was the most subtle and experienced politician of the older group" He was "the ascetic defender of property in the name of the most religious and idealist principles of humility and love of poverty". He was "the prophet who by his personal saintliness and selflessness could unlock the door to the heart of the masses where the moderate bourgeois leaders could not get a hearing—and the best guarntee of the shipwreck of any mass movement which had the blessing of his association. This Jonah of revolution, this general of unbroken disasters was the mascot of the bourgeoisie in each wave of the developing Indian struggle" Regarding the period 1928-29, Dutt wrote : "All hopes of the bourgeoisie (the hostile might say of imperialism) were fixed on Gandhi as the man to ride the waves, to unleash just enough of the mass movement in order to drive a suceessful bargain, and at the same time to save India from revolution", *India Today*, p. 334.

KAPIL KUMAR*

Ideology, Congress And Peasants In 1930s : Class Adjustment Or Submission ?

FROM THE time the Indian National Congress entered the phase of mass politics and mass struggles till the coming of independence one crucial question which bothered the British was, what would be the attitude of Congress towards the agrarian issues—particularly the no-rent demand of the peasantry ? The official literature reveals the concern over this issue for it was the peasantry which provided the bulk of man power for the Congress in the course of the freedom struggle. To analyse the Congress attitude towards the peasants and *gise versa* we have to take into account the various roles of the Congress—as a platform, as an organised political party, in the course of mass movements and while in power (1937-39). This relationship in the light of the Indian National Movement (INM) has been studied by historians of various schools—Nationalist, Colonial, Marxist, Liberal, Subaltarn, etc. The most recent analysis has been put forward by the Neo-Nationalist historians while discussing the 'long term dynamics' of the Indian National Congress[1]. One can take issues with them on various aspects but I shall confine myself to the peasant question.

It has been argued by Bipan Chandra that the INM was basically the product of the 'central or primary contradiction' of colonial India, the contradiction between colonialism and Indian people[2]. Thus, according to him 'inner class contradictions had to be seen as secondary and therefore subordinated to the primary contradiction ; they had to be seen as contradictions within the camp of the people and class struggles based on them had to be waged in a non-antagonistic fashion'. He asserts that the 'Congress, and in particular Gandhi, practised the strategy of class adjustment' and the INC had 'no class essence.' In his analysis the interests of the Indian people are projected as a whole against colonialism (one would like to know the attitude of princes and landlords vis-a-vis colonialism when independence was in sight); Nationalism as the sole ideology of the Congress which 'never laid down any ideological condition for joining it', 'Marxism found a ready welcome and no strong anti-Marxist intellectual current

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developed in the nationalist ranks till 1947, and 'at no stage did a break in the Congress occur over ideology'. His assumption is that the 'ideological openness enhanced the possibility of transforming the Congress and the 'responsibility for the failure' to effect 'a basic transformation of the Congress ideology' lies not in 'the inevitability of the stranglehold of the right wing or Gandhi over it' but has to be 'basically located in the theories and practices of the left'. The right wing, he stresses, was 'willing to go quite far in accommodating the left so long as it remained within the parametres of class adjustment and peaceful change'. He has many more observations such as pro-poor orientation of the Congress ; basing politics on the poor and the shift from PCP to STS (Struggle Truce Struggle)[3].

None among the 'left'[4] in India ever undermined the historical necessity of fighting colonialism nor does any Marxist historian undermine it in his analyses. But at the same time what we believe is that any class or group of the Indian society which sided with colonialism was in itself a constituent of the 'primary contradiction' and would not agree to it being projected as an inner or secondary contradiction in the name of having a united front. Such a possibility could have been there only if the Indian landlords sided with the INC but this was not the case.[5] It has, while fighting colonialism become fashionable to cite Mao on class adjustment[6]. What should be taken into account is that Mao advocated this at a time when Japanese imperialism was trying to make inroads in China and the landlords were not the active supporters of imperialism. Even then Mao adopted and advocated a cautious approach towards them and the aim of agrarian revolotiun was never forgotten. In India the INC never had agrarian revolution as its aim, either as a primary or a secondary goal. Moreover, imperialism was firmly entrenched here having the active support of the landlords—not only individually but also from their class organisations. If combating imperialism was the only issue, the sort of class adjustment being advocated had been in a way experienced by the Indian people way back in 1857 which ultimately resulted in the princes and landlords throwing in their lot with imperialism and further oppression of the peasantry.

It would not be a vague generalisation to state that in rural India the British authority was known more so through the landlords than any other leverage of the Raj.[7] In the imperial language they were the forces of order, the loyal supporters and the 'bulwark against the disintegrating forces'.[8] They played a dominant role in strengthening the British authority and opposed any kind of anti-British activity. To quote the Nawab of Chattari (in 1939):[9]

> . . .the greatest of all services the zamindars had rendered was the maintenance of law and order in the rural areas.

Bipan Chandra acknowledges that 'the zamindars and landlords did not support the Congress except individually' they 'either supported . . .officially sponsored organisations or had . . . their own political parties'.[10] Yet,

in his analysis they do not form a part of the 'primary contradiction'. Even *in individual capacity, where they did support the Congress,* was the support forth coming due to *nationalism?* Was not any *vested class* interest also behind it? I have else where shown that the landlords were never a constituent in the multi-class alliance against colonialism.[11] Though the Congress had always assured them about their status and privileges it was only during the ministry period that a formal direct relationship was established between the two. To sustain their dominant position, to pursue their class interests, the Congress victory in elections and the increasing influence of the left among the masses were the factors responsible for this direct relationship which the landlords and the Congress right wing sought with each other. The outcome was the Congress-zamindar pact in Bihar and similar negotiations in other regions. The revealing feature of this pact and negotiations is that while questions related to landlords' rights and privileges, along with the tenants' position, were discussed and agreed upon there was no mention of landlords role in the INM. In the vast literature available on Congress-zamindar negotiations (1937-39) we find that those negotiating on behalf of the Congress at no stage asked the landlords to support or side with the national movement. These leaders (Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, etc.) were fully aware of the fact that they had acted against the declared policy (Lucknow and Faizpur resolutions) of the Congress and they took precautions to justify their actions. This is apparent from what Rajendra Prasad wrote to Ramdayalu Sinha:[12]

> . . . we had gone to the furthest length possible and had *done so even at the risk of being openly criticised* in the All India Congress Committee *of having gone against the Congress resolution*. I had *in anticipation brought* the Maulana so that if any question arose in the Working Committee or the AICC, I might *have a strong supporter by my side.*

Prasad had no doubts that he 'shall come in for a great deal of criticism from not only the Kisan Sabha but Congressmen in general and even perhaps from our high command'.[13] Azad was assigned the task of taking Jawaharlal Nehru into confidence and he believed that the latter had 'an uncommon capacity for thought and to work in co-operation with others'. Azad gave the assurance that there will be no difficulty as far as Nehru was concerned.[14] The green signal from Nehru, to go against the declared Congress policy, came when Kriplani wrote on his behalf:[15] 'If You and Maulana Saheb were satisfied it was alright'.

What followed was the process for agreement during which Prasad pleaded with landlords that if the Congress preposals were 'unsatisfactory the zamindars should be propared to propose a better solution' and assured Mohd. Ismail that the 'Government will not fail to give it their utmost consideration'.[16] Here I am not going into the details of the agreement but worth mentioning is what Patel advised Prasad:[17]

> It is no use trying to improve it, if it has to be forced down the throats of unwilling landlords. We shall have to resist the excessive demands of the tenants who have been worked up and expect too much from the Congress ministries.

Who had worked up the peasants during this period? Precisely it was Congress election propaganda in the country side to muster peasants' ɔport. The Faizpur agrarian programme, Nehru believed, was of 'great ɔortance' for the rural voters and was prominently propagated during ; election campaign.[18] Canvassing amid the Allahabad villagers he ted:[19]

> There were only two parties in India—those fighting for the cause of people and the other against it. They (people) had no power to solve that problem of poverty. Only a handful of people were ruling over them. . . whether the rulers were Indians or Englishmen they only knew how to further their ends . . . The Congress was going to the Councils to keep out Khan Bhadhurs, Raja Bhadhurs and Nawabs who sided with Government.

Patel had told the peasants that it was only the Congress candidate 'who will sooner or later help him out of the morass of poverty into which he is sunk'.[20] A growing feeling was that the Congress *raj* would replace the British *raj* in two months time. The following example from U.P. is one out of many which indicates how and why the peasant expectations had gone up:[21]

> Congress volunteers are going about with notebooks and asking tenants what their present rent was. The tenant says perhaps Rs. 2 a bigha. The Congress volunteer says: "That's all right. If you vote for the Congress that will be put down to 4 annas". He writes it down in his notebook and the unfortunate villager is duly impressed.

An interesting development of such propoganda in Bihar was that some of the voters regarded the ballot box as a letter box for Gandhi and 'smuggled in petitions addressed to him with their voting papers'.[22] Even during the interim ministry period peasant sentiments were utilised to embarass the Government. When the Nawab of Chattari formed his ministry in U P., the tenants were encouraged by the Congress not to pay rents as all arrears would be remitted when the Congres assumed office.[23] But once in office, the Congress advised them to pay rents immediately or else it will lead to evictions.[24] Thus, it was clear that the peasant had to be resisted—not the land-lord, and the right wing had all the liberty to go back on election promises and flout the Lucknow and Faizpur resolutions of the Congress in relation to peasantry.

The Maharaja of Dharbanga, after getting a negative reply in relation to the zamindars being protected as a minority by the British, sought the Bihar Governors' advise regarding their joining the Congress.[25] But this was found to be ultimately prejudicial to their interests. The answer

was to have a strong zamindari organisation and through it influence the Congress. This led to the formation of the All India Landholders Association in April, 1939 Throughout the ministry period the zamindars confidently declared that for their sake 'the kisan movement was being *suppressed by the Congress' and it was in their interest to 'strengthen the* hands *of the Government in counteracting the mischievous move of the leftist group in the Congress to make Russia of India'.*[26] *The Congress 'had no alternative but to compromise with the zamindars', the only 'question was whether the right wingers remained in office or not.'*[27] Maharaja Dharbanga stressed in his presidential address to the ALHI conference :[28]

> Most of those who are in power in the Congress organisation which runs the Government of seven provinces want adjustment and peace . . . we want adjustment because therein *lies our security.* We want peace because only then we *can develop our strength.* For a minority interest like ours it is only desperation that can drive us to fight and I have reasons to believe that *so long as the group following the directions of Mahatma Gandhi rules in the Congress and the Socialists and Communists are kept in check we shall not have to take the extreme step.*

It is evident that the landlords were duty bound to support and actively assist the right wing—which also looked upon them for this—in curbing the left, but had no obligation to support the same group in the fight against colonialism. The lone voice of Chandreswar Prasad Singh (leader of the opposition in Bihar), raised reluctantly at the AILH conference, to fight for freedom found no response. But a resolution was passed to form a Committee of Understanding for negotiating with the Congress and provincial governments regarding the problems of landlords and tenants.[29] In fact when it came to opposing the British, the landlords would not distinguish between the right and the left but treated the Congress as one. The point I intend to highlight is that the landlords were not a constituent in the multi-class alliance against the British, but at the same time were in alliance with the group within the Congress which stood for the supression of the kisan movement.

Here I am not, even for a moment, negating the historical necessity of fighting colonialism but as mentioned earlier I treat landlordism as very much a part of what the Neo-Nationalists describe as the 'primary contradiction'. While projecting landlordism as secondary they advocate a policy of class adjustment which they believe was rightly pursued by the Congress and Gandhi in particular. This they stress should have been followed by the left and there is no mention in their analysis about the left taking guard against this 'inner contradiction'. They fail to acknowledge the fear of a take over by the 'secondary contradiction' once the 'primary contradiction' has been dealt with—the fear which came true after 15 August, 1947. Can a Marxist activist, theoritician or historian advocate such a historiography ? I leave the question open.

Moreover, I suggest that what Gandhi and the right wing was preaching to the peasants was not 'class adjustment' or collaboration with the landlords but submission to them : 'You should bear a little if the zamindar torments you' ; 'If the zamindar harass them I would ask my kisan brethern not to fight with them but adopt a conciliatory attitude'; 'Kisans must be advised scrupulously to abide by their agreement with the zamindar, whether such agreement is written or inferred from custom.[30] One can go on adding such citations. The legitimate interests of the zamindars were described by Mahadev Desai as a 'commission for the use of their intelligence in wisely directing the energies of their tenants'.[31] Despite acknowledging the 'present terrible inequality' between them Gandhi treated the two at par, for his logic was :[32]

> The man who supplies brains and metal is as much a tiller as the one who labours with his hands.

Certainly Gandhi was not unaware of the exploitation of the peasants but his outcry was against peasant violence and he was silent about the violence practised by the landlords. It was the sole responsibility of the peasant to improve relations with the zamindar. And if the peasants were prepared to carry the struggle by adopting non violent methods, still they were to be checked in the name of *charkha*, *khaddar* or the constructive programme.[33] The solution for high rents, forced labour, cesses, evictions, etc. was the constructive programmme of Gandhi. It is interesting to cite 'a good example of class adjustment' by referring to Gandhi's manifesto to U.P. Kisans in 1931 asking them to pay 75 or 50 per cent rent,[34] but equally important here is to cite that Nehr was sent there to restrain the peasants[35] and the tactics he adopted. Kalka Prasad, who wanted to peacefully picket the house of a landlord demanding restoration of lands to the peasants evicted during the Civil Disobedience Movement was suspended from the Congress and Nehru assured the taluqdar :[36]

> I am sorry that Kalka Prasad should have behaved in this manner and put you to trouble. But I hope you realise that Congress has nothing to do with any such acts.
>
> You will appreciate that this is the fault of some misguided individuals. We propose to take action against them . . . Meanwhile I shall be glad if you will inform me of any grievance that you might have against the local Congress workers in Rai Bareily.

A similar action was taken against Markande Singh in 1938 at Benares.[37] Gandhi regarded the agrarian unrest as a 'much greater danger' and the 'real danger' (in 1939) with the Congress having the responsibility to discipline it.[38] The disciplined peasants, in Gandhian terminology, were those who would not even non-violently oppose the zamindar's violence ; would not stop services to the landlords; would pay rents ; would not prevent the arrest of their leaders and abide by all government laws. All this was to be done inspite of landlords' hostility to the INM. Thus, the argu-

ment of class adjustment for maintaining unity in the name of nationalis, fails to explain the situation in totality.

On many occasions the issue of national unity was set aside by th Congress. The picketting of landlords was checked *in* the name of unit whereas the picketting of a Muslim shop was encouraged in the full know ledge that such an act would lead to communal disturbances. This leads u to conclude that issues which did not attack the class character of th Congress could be taken up at the cost of national unity but issues, wher questions of class conflict were involved, were to be suppressed in the nam of national unity. Mushirul Hasan has shown that even during 'the mas contact Muslim peasants and underprivileged groups in the countryside the very sections supposed to be mobilised on a massive scale were largel ignored'.[40] His study shows how communal minded persons led the dis trict Congress committees ; Muslims associated with Congress were no allowed to contest PCC elections and how the right wingers worked for th defeat of those Congress candidates who happened to be Muslims.[41] Mobi lisation on economic lines, in order to combat communalism, was not to be taken up or was to be opposed by the right wingers. It is a cruel jok of history that the very leadership which would supress economic issues in the name of violence and bloodshed could not avoid it though it cam through a communal divide of the country.

Let us examine the ideological openness of the Congress right win but not only in the light of various radical resolutions (Karachi to Faizpur adopted by the Congress but also in relation to the actual functioning of the party and in relation to their implementation. During the Calcutta AICC meeting in October 1937 it was strongly felt by the right wing that they should organise themselves and Jairamdas Doulatrams' suggestion that 'we should not sit down over the matter any more' was put into active operation.[42] Instructions were issued that all 'orthodox Programmewalla would work in concerted manner or else there would be 'great difficulty' in future.[43] In clear language Patel wrote to Prasad :[44]

> Bapu is not at all happy . . . Anyway we may have a fixed struggle at Haripura . . . *Please see that in selection of delegates, eliminate al anti-Gandhi* elements. We must no more tolerate the forces of disorder in the name of united front. They have taken undue advantage of our toleration, but time has come for a definite stand.

Patel's belief, all throughout, had been that the Kisan Sabha 'will give much greater trouble in future' ; that is why he had 'always been against its formation' and 'such rival organisations' were 'bound to destroy the Congress prestige'. He asserted :[45]

> They (peasant leaders) are waiting for a time when they could displace us That is why I have given them no quarters.

Prasad instructed his friends in Bihar to organise on the lines suggested by Patel. The right wing and the zamindars joined hands to crush the

Kisan Sabha and establish their firm hold over the Congress organisation. We list here the methods adopted for achieving this aim.[46]

1. Congress membership forms were refused to peasants whereas a large number of zamindari *amalas* (agents) were enrolled as members.
2. Wherever it was possible, the Kisan Sabha members were not allowed to file nomination papers In Andhra also the nomination of P. Sundarayya for Congress delegates seat from Kovur Taluq, Nellore was rejected on the ground that he was a communist.[47] The propaganda against the pro-Kisan Sabha Congressmen was carried on the lines that as socialists they were irreligious persons who did not believe in God or that they had been turned out from the Congress.[48]
3. Pro-zamindari returning officers were appointed who manipulated elections against the peasant candidates.
4. Where the peasant delegates got elected there were appeals against them and the DCC election tribunals set aside their election on one pretext or the other.
5. To cover up these manipulations the pro-Kisan Sabha Congressmen were implicated in cases of violence and criminal cases were instituted against them. This resulted in convictions. This was done under the instructions of the Bihar Premier, for a happy Governor informed the Viceroy :[49] 'My Prime Minister tells me that his followers are starting criminal cases'.

The pro-peasant Congressmen while facing the violence of the zamindar and right wing sponsored candidates, did not approach the police on account of their faith in the Congress creed that 'in a dispute between Congressmen regarding Congress affairs the aid of civil authorities should not be invoked'.[50]

Rajendra Prasad, in a letter to the Bihar P.M., cited a long circular from Nehru to the members of the Working Committee :[51]

> He refers to the awakening among kisans, industrial labourers and students and points out that the Congress ministries have to deal with the situation tactfully. The use of repressive laws and coercive methods he naturally dislikes and opines that this can be restored to only in very exceptional cases.

Prasad asserted that Nehru's views were to be kept in mind while dealing with the situation. We have seen the tactics adopted during the organisational elections but there was more in store to deal with the Kisan Sabha. Instead of acting against the Kisan Sabha from the top, the right wing initiated the onslaught from the district level The Champaran, Saran and Monghyr DCCs instructed Sahajanand Saraswati—a member of the Bihar PCC and president of the Bihar Kisan Sabha—not to visit the districts and local Congressmen were threatened with disciplinary action if they attended

his meetings.[52] Though Sahajanand raised the issue of civil liberties[53] *regarding the ban, Patel welcomed it :*[54]

> *Personally I feel that such action should have been taken long ago, but better late than never is a good thing. I hope it is not late to mend matters and prevent the enormous mischief that Swami was doing.*

Let us also examine the 'enormous mischief' of the Swami during his period.[55] In actual practice he was making the peasants aware of heir rights ; organising them ; urging them to join the Congress in large iumbers and reminding the ministers to implement the accepted agrarian rogramme and fulfill the promises made during the elections ; preaching elf-defensive measures against the violence practised by landlords and ad- 'ocating a fight not only against imperialism but against its allies also. 'his was termed as working against the Congress creed and breaking the Congress discipline. One wonders what this discipline was for it was not pplicable on the right wing or all the anti-left forces in the Congress even vhen their activities were openly against the publicly declared policy of the Congress. The Kisan Sabha was also accused of sheltering disgruntled lements or people who were hostile to the Congress but no specific names 'ere ever cited in this regard. Another issue raised was that the Kisan abha preached violence and was creating an atmosphere of class war. No 'here did the Kisan Sabha incite attacks on landlords, loot them or cause ieir physical extinction. On the contrary the peasants were advised self- efensive measures like prostrating in the fields if forcefully evicted. In ict for the right wing if the peasants even adopted Gandhian forms of ruggle against the landlords, it was violence and Nehru was also with the ght wing as we have seen in the case of Kalka Prasad. Going against ie Congress policy of consulting the Kisan Sabha and negotiating with imindars was discipline but if the peasants, as a protest against this, eacefully marched to the councils demanding justice and implementation f Congress promises, that was indiscipline and 'rowdism'. But the zamin- irs were given a free hand to parade lorry loads of reserve police in their llages so as to warn the peasants that even "in Congress raj" they were still as powerful as ever" and the peasants inspite of crop failure, should iy exhoribitant rents.[56]

Beside the landlords, there were two other forces which took an tive part in encouraging the right wing to take action against the Kisan ibha. The first obviously was the colonial government. All official secret id confidential correspondence of this period refers to the agrarian inger. The Viceroy suggested to the Governor of Bihar to "give a bed ne story" to his ministers of how in the good old days the Government ised to stop nonsense of this sort'.[57] The ministers fully realised the inger and "advocated that the kisan leaders correspondence should be tercepted"[58] and the Government should have verbatim reports of the eeches delivered by the kisan leaders.[59] And by April 1938 the Viceroy

was reporting home :[60]

> The ministries deserve credit for meeting this threat with resolution. The policy of the Congress party towards the kisan organisations has been firm, and even repressive.
>
> The second was the personality of G.D. Birla the capitalist—who served as a link between the Congress leaders, ministers and the British Government during this period.[61] He "very much disliked the peasants in Bihar marching to the Assembly house" and wrote to Mahadev Desai :[62]
>
> I fear that in course of time indiscipline will grow more and more unless *strict measures* are taken. I only hope that the Congress authorities are fully alive to the situation and they *will take all necessary measures.*

We have quite a few letters exchanged between Birla and Desai which urge for action against the Kisan Sabha :[63]

> Unless the Congress tells the peasants clearly that their position could be improved ultimately through their own hard work alone and not by any stroke of wand, I dont think this discontent will subside....All the enthusiasm about the release of prisoners will begin to fade after some time. People will demand more bread and bread is not going to come out of the confiscation of zamindaries. . . .The question of discontent is just now linked with economics and unless steps are taken to make the peasants realise what is possible and what not, I fear the ferment will grow to such an extent that it will become impossible after a certain stage for the ministers to maintain discipline.

What we see is that the period between September and December 1937 saw hectic activity and exchange of views amongst the landlords, capaitalists, British Government and the right wing in relation to the peasant question, all of them urging the ministers to take strong action.

The Premier of Bihar "told Vallabhbhai that if only the Working Committee will support them through thick and thin instead of censuring them at every step, they will manage Bihar well".[64] And the CWC came out in defence of the action taken by the Bihar PCC against the Kisan Sabha and its leadership. It is relevant to see how this whole process went through. Rajendra Prasad had collected, from the Bihar Premier, C.I.D. reports related to the activities of kisan leaders These were informally placed before the CWC members.[65] The Kisan Sabha was given no opportunity to explain or plead its position and the rightists emerged victorious. All along they had been sure about their success and the Bihar Premier had assured the Governor that "he was confident that he would get their support so long as Mr. Gandhi was alive".[66]

Sahajanand, as a protest, resigned from the Working Committee of the Bihar PCC.[67] This was welcomed by the right wing but still he was dangerous as he had not resigned from the Congress.[68] If he was really guilty of what he was accused of (violence, classwar, indiscipline, hostility

to ministers etc.) why was he not prosecuted ? The Congress minis "*very anxious*" *to do that but the difficulty felt was, firstly, he alw*ǝ *himself* "*just within the law*[69] *and secondly, as the Governor felt, in his possession* "*complete evidence of corruption involving th*ǝ *Minister's son*" *and the PM feared that* "*he would not hesitate to u*ǝ *attacked*".[70]

If in Bombay Congress MLAs were warning peasants against ing Kisan Sabha[71], in Madras Rajagopalachari was practising methods. He ridiculed Jagannath Das for arranging functions for I Yajnik as "the general impression among our friends in Bombay is th is not now helpful to Congress and distinctly the opposite".[72] An example of his onslaught on the left is what he wrote to Pattabhi :[73]

> Ignorance of the working of political institutions and actors o political stage outside our province combined with incorrigibl dency to offer pooja to outsiders leads our municipal bodie local organisations to all sorts of irrconcilable positions and resolutions. What is the meaning of Masulipaten Municipali present address of welcome to Mr. Giri and Mr. M.N. Roy ?

And soon a circular was issued to taluk and district committiees t prior permission for arranging such functions. This was followed b Batliwala case in Madras.

S.S. Batliwala used to come to Madras from Bombay to preach a the peasants. In the Venkatagiri zamindari he discussed the pe grievances ; attributed them to the landlord ; asked peasants to or and become Congress members ; represent their grievances to minis Rajagopalachari was "very anxious" about his arrest before he could any more speeches. During his prosecution Rajagopalachari "too trouble personally to go through the public prosecutor's arguments t court and suggested amendments". He was very keen that the "atta constituted Government and incitement to violence should be stresse as little as possible made of the attacks on Great Britain and E rule".[75] Why such a course was advocated became clear as the case ceeded. Batliwala's defence was that as the official policy of the Co party, which is in power today, is the severence of the British conne he "cannot be punished for advocating the policy of the party in pow To justify this he asked for the presence of the P.M. as a witness was obviously refused by the judge. In spite of the assessor's verdi not guility the judge sentenced him for (months simple imprison Rajagopalachari's comment was that the prosecution had the d results as no such speeches were delivered in Madras after that.[77]

The Congress stood for the release of political prisoners b release of Chauri Chaura prisoners was not to be stressed[78] and the secution and imprisonment of peasant leaders continued under the Co ministries (one can cite here the arrests of Rahul Sankritayan, Jaduna Sharma, etc.). We would also like to cite here that when the po

prisoners were on hunger strike in the Patna jail they were told by a minister that more important than their release was the question of giving agrarian relief to peasants[79] and the peasants were told that more important was the release of political prisoners. On the other hand, not only the right wing but Gandhi himself was opposed to the released prisoners being given public welcome or being carried in processions after their release :[80]

> If my reading of the Congress method is correct, the large public demonstration that took place on the discharge of Kakori prisoners, was to say the least, a political mistake.

The right wing believed Nehru would resent this[81] but Desai was happy to tell Birla that Nehru "fully appreciated it" and had personally refrained from taking part in demonstrations and receptions".[82] In Ahmedabad Nehru made a public statement dissapproving them entirely.[83] Difference over methods could be one thing but using the colonial language while referring to the political prisioners was a common practice with the right wingers, as a letter from Desai to Birla indicates .[84]

> You know the Kakori *dacoit prisoners* who were convicted some years ago of the *most violent and unpardonable crimes*. Pantji released them all. . . But the moment their release was announced, our *idiotic* Congress committee makes an announcement of taking those people out in procession. Poor Pantji was absolutely at sea. He was persuaded to be firm. He made it clear that if they persisted it would not be possible for him to do any similar thing in future. Jawaharlal, too, did not give any encouragement to the Congress enthusiasts. And so every thing ended well.

In U.P. a close eye was being kept on pro-kisan Congressmen The UP PCC circular of 7 June 1938 asked the local committees to send regular reports regarding the activities of Kisan Sabha. The following points were to be taken special care of in the reports :[85]

1. Is there any tension between Kisan Sabha and the Congress.
2. No such person is active in Kisan Sabha against whom disciplinary action was taken.
3. The flag of the Kisan Sabha is tri-colour or some other one.
4. Are the Congress members hurt by the Kisan Sabha activities.
5. Whether the Kisan Sabha is affiliated to any provincial organisation : whether its accounts are managed or not ; what influence it carries with the people.

Mohanlal Sexena issued a confidential circular to PCC members stressing :[86]

> At a time when the Congress has to meet the onslaughts from the Muslim League, the zamindars and taluqdars and the capitalist interests, for any section of the Congressmen to go about propagating that the Congress has betrayed the kisans and that they should not expect any good from it, is nothing short of treason and needs being dealt with a strong hand.

On the one hand, he was accepting taluqdari and capitalists attack on Congress but was not prepared to take peasants support against them. What a section of Congressmen was being accused of preaching was not true. In fact, this section was opposing the increasing influence of the taluqdars in the Congress and urging the Congress to protect itself from opportunists who were bringing a bad name to it. Baba Ram Chandra was one such Congressmen for whom Gandhi was the only leader and Congress the supreme party. His worry was that the capitalists and landlords were "destroying our pious Congress."[87] The Congressmen were "flowing in the stream of office acceptance" and the landlords joined the national body "not to serve the people but in order to control the people through various legal provisions". He admitted that by acquiring office the Congress had brought some light to the darker life of peasants but on the whole they remained entrapped by "thugs, under whose influence the Congress forgets its real self and we have to face miseries". He was alarmed at this increasing influence and if unchecked, he believed, "even swaraj would not end the people's miseries as these people will take over from the white Sarkar".[88] The Congress commitment to serve the people was being altered under the influence of lanlords :[89]

> By practising oppression, efforts are being made to weaken the kisans and mazdurs and make them submissive. The kisans are every day sending evidences in this regard to Congress office.

So critical was he of the functioning of the local level Congress leaders that he wrote :[90]

> After wearing khadi and being Congress leaders, with the help of police they assault the peasants. By this treachery they are ruining the Congress . Congressi dress, stick in hand, with police at their back, then why dust should not be thrown in the eyes of the ministers.

He asserted that the way managers and agents had destroyed princes and landlords some *khaddardharies* were doing the same to the Congress ; the outcome was that instead of peace there was corruption.[91]

It was no coincidence that such vioces were raised in other regions also. In Vizakapatnam a Congress Vigilance Committee was formed to save the Congress from "cunning, calculating politicians who newly joined the Congress" and "created a mercenary army amongst primary members...to fight election battles.[92] V. Anuntha Rao, the secretary of this committee, appealed to start "cleanse the Congress campaign" to maintain the sanctity of the Congress organisation.[93] Not less revealing was the Report of the Violence Enquiry Committee instituted by Bihar PCC. It was reported that there was "a widespread desire to capture Congress organisations by all kinds of people to get the position of advantage for themselves, their friends and relations and for capturing local bodies'.[94] Office acceptance 'no doubt did bring some relief to the people' but 'it also started attracting opportunists and political adventurers'. Even the old

Congressmen 'felt that now was the time for reward for the services made by them in the past' and 'there was heart burning if in the distribution of spoils some went with out a share'.[95] However the report was kept confidential as it was an indictment of the right wingers.

At the Haripura session, N.G. Ranga objected to the presentation of the General Secretary's report on Congress activities since the Faizpur session. The objection was in relation to the portions which dealt with the kisan activities. Pages 31 to 34 of the report gave the impression that 'on the whole the kisans and workers' were 'growing a sort of anti-Congress atmosphere in the country'.[96] The outgoing president Jawahar lal, while defending the report, argued that the statements were a fact with the exception that they 'cannot be made into a generalisation'. He referred to the Congress constitution under which the General Secretary was required to submit a report and it was for the 'house to express its opinion over it'.[97] Sahajand opined that though technically the report expressed the views of an individual but none the less they gave the impression that they were the views of the Congress. Ranga's motion was lost when put to vote.[98] Nehru had not only withdrawn support to the Kisan Sabha but had strongly defended the views expressed against the Kisan Sabha. Earlier it had been Nehru's advise to Sahajanand in 1936 to keep the Sabha separate from the Congress'[99] He had advocated that the peasants should get organised ; 'stand on their own legs and form kisan sabhas in every village'.[100] In 1937 also he declared :[101]

> The outstanding problem of India is the peasant problem. All else is secondary.

The coming of Congress ministries, he felt, had given new hope and new life to the peasants where as the big zamindars and taluqdars were 'organising to resist their long deferred justice to the peasantry'.[102] How much of a leftist was Nehru or how much he stood for the peasants is but understood not just by taking into account his public utterences but by his actual operational politics. On each occasion whether it was the controversy over Andhra pledge, the danda cult, selection of candidates, tenancy legislation, kisan demonstrations, the ban on Kisan Sabha, etc., he not only sided with the right wing but put his weight against the Kisan Sabha.[103] He virtually kept himself aloof on the tenancy bills giving a free hand to the right wing to deal as they wished. He did not hesitate to condemn peasant demonstrations,[104] and as we have seen earlier, was directly responsible for the ouster of leaders like Kalka Prasad. He went to the extent of warning peasant leaders like Shibban Lal Saxena even after the resignation of ministries and assured the Viceroy in this regard.[105] In public however he maintained a pro-left posture by criticising the attempt to drive out the left from the Congress which would 'spread confusion in the mass mind, more especially the peasantry and thus weaken the Congress'.[106]

The Kisan Sabha, all through the 1930s constantly supported the Congress. At no stage did it ever pose an alternative to the Congress or

work against it—even at the time when it faced direct action from the ri wing. Inspite of its anti-landlord ideology, the Kisan Sabha compromi once the landlords had been taken in as Congress candidates for some se in Bihar during the electiors. This was done as Congress was consider as the superior organisation and the Kisan Sabha was bound to follow t Congress dictates.[107] It was opposed to the acceptance of office but on the Congress decided to go ahead the Kisan Sabha stood by the Congre decision. It looked up on the ministries to bring relief to the peasants an when the right wing joined hands with the landlords ignoring the Kis Sabha, the kisan leaders organised the peasantry but not to oppose t Congress but to remind it of the pledges and promises made to t peasantry. As Sahajanand put it :[108]

> It is not understandable why the Ministers are afraid of peasa demonstrations and meetings. . . .If we dont hold them now when w we hold them. It is wrong to say that these are aimed at expressir noconfidence in the ministries.

The great 'mischief monger' as the rightists described him always asserted:[1

> I believe in the basic principles of the Congress...I accept them n merely because they are the principles of the Congress but becau under the peculiar conditions for the freedom of the country an emancipation of the kisans from oppression and exploitation n other line of work is possible.

He tried his best to assure the right wing that whatever *shakti* (strength)h had he would devote to the strengthening of the Congress as he 'had fait and confidence in the Congress' and pleaded that the 'kisan sabhaites als claimed the right to serve the Congress, the country and the mankind'.[110]

Bipan Chandra has argued that Sahajanand 'would not give an io of concession to or make any accomodation with the Congress ministry'[1 —an over simplification and baseless generalisation for a period full c complexities.

At a time when Vijay Lakxmi Pandit was advocating dictatorship wit in the Congress organisation to check growing indiscipline[112] and the rig wing was virtually begging from the government to distinguish between the and the left wing[113] Sahajanand Saraswati was advocating (1939) :[114]

> We all cling to the Congress not for its magic or mystery, but be cause it represents the nation, it has not taken any false step at crit cal junctures. . .All our attempts are simply to strengthen its hand in taking opportune decisions at this most critical juncture in ou national struggle for deliverance.

He had "declared times without number that none but a lunatic could thin of weakening the Congress at the present phase of the evolution of India' struggle for independence'.[115] The Kisan Sabha wanted to transform th creed and mentality of the Congress from within.[116] When N.G. Ranga, i Andhra, wanted to come out from Congress, it was Sundrayya who restrai ned him.[117]

The divide between the right and left in the Congress was not on the
je of violence and non-violence as argued by Bipan Chandra[118] but on
n ideological positions regarding the nature of Indian society The
ire onslaught on the Kisan Sabha or the left was motivated not due to
;ir taking an alternative position but due to the class outlook of the
htist leadership which controlled the high command and local organisa-
ns. The Kisan Sabha faced the triple oppression (British, landlords and
ngress right wing) during this period. Yet the Kisan Sabha supported
; INC and the peasants stood firmly behind the Congress.

If the Congress had a definite strategy to fight imperialism it also
rsued a strategy not only to check but also curb the left and the Kisan
ɔha. The 'long term dynamics' of the Congress (if there was any) has
be analysed by basing the study on these twin objectives of the Congress.

1. Bipan Chandra, *The Long Term Dynamics of the Indian National Congress.* (Presidential Address to the Indian History Congress) Amritsar, 1985.
2. *Ibid*
3. *Ibid.* All citations are from there.
4. When I use the term Left for 1930s I include Communists, Socialists, Kisan Sabhas and Trade Unions. We refuse to accept Jawaharlal Nehru as a socialist for a leader has to be judged by his actions and not by his speeches alone.
5. For landlords' support to imperialism see also Kapil Kumar, *Peasants in Revolt*, New Delhi, 1985. p. 177-8.
6. Bipan Chandra, *op. cit*
7. Kapil Kumar, *op. cit.*
8. *Ibid.*
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61. These observations are based on examining the correspondence of Gandhi, Birla, Prasad, Patel, etc.
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63. *Ibid.* p. 106.
64. *Ibid.* p. 127.
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The National Movement And The Communist Party in Kerala

Introduction

THE DEVELOPMENT of the communist movement in Kerala has merited the attention of numerous scholars. The firm basis for the future advance of the communist movement in the region was laid during the freedom struggle. Many of these specialists on Kerala have laboured to link up the success of CPI to certain unique features of Kerala society such as its high literacy,[1] specificities of breakdown of the matrilineal system,[2] the skill of the communists in utilising the caste divisions in Kerala,[3] and so on. It is evident that to these scholars, the development of working class and communist movement is an exceptional episode that has got to be explained by the existence of certain special circumstances. They cannot perceive the development of the communist movement as a logical and normal outcome of the class contradictions and struggle.

There is yet an another school of thought which does not accept the development of CPI as a historical necessity and, therefore, implicitly considers its genesis as a result of manipulations or, more generously, as a result of the sectarian understanding of the communists. According to them the Indian National Congress was not a class party or party serving the interests of any particular class but a genuine people's party of all the anti-imperialist classes in India, though under bourgeois hegemony. The difference between an ordinary bourgeois party and a people's party under bourgeois hegemony is held to be "the fact that at a particular juncture people's party might have as its leadership, programme and ideology which could be superficially identified with an ordinary class party, but unlike the ordinary bourgeois party it is always open to transformation into its opposite."[4] There was always a historical option for the communists to work within the Congress......the 'historic bloc' of all anti imperialist forces—and replace bourgeois hegemony by proletarian hegemony. Historically it was the only path for advance because the national movement and the Congress movement were synonymous But this possibility was not utilised by communists who considered the Congress as a bourgeois led movement

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and chose to form an independent party of the working class with disastrous consequences. *The failure of the communists was not in* evolving correct tactics but their strategic conception of the national movement itself was at fault.[5]

We do not intend to survey the extensive debate within the Commintern and the Indian communist groups on the national movement or the twists and turns of the tactical positions adopted over time. But the following two may be considered the essence of the communist strategy : (a) the united front of all anti-imperialist classes and (b) the working class leadership of the anti-imperialist united front. The feudal landlords and princely rulers being the rural pillars of imperialist rule, agrarian revolution formed the axis of the national liberation struggle. Of the two modern classes, given the character of our epoch and the weakness of bourgeois class under colonial conditions, the Indian national bourgeoisie could not take a consistent and non-vacillating anti-imperialist and an anti-feudal position[6]. Therefore only under the leadership of the working class can the agrarian revolution be carried out and national liberation be completed Establishment of a party of the working class, the communist party, was a necessary condition for the fulfillment of the above tasks. To sum up, the task before the Indian communists was to a build up the united front, and at the same time to combat the vacillations of the bourgeoisie and maintain the independence of the working class party.

It has been claimed that the rich experience of Kerala will contribute to a rethinking of the traditional communist notions regarding the Indian freedom struggle.[7] It is in this context that the following analysis of the experience of communists of Kerala in the national movement becomes relevant. Does the experience of communists in Kerala invalidate the general understanding of CPI on the national movement ?

The Formation of the Communist Party in Malabar

It was in October 1939 that a secret conference of Congrees Socialist Party leaders of Malabar resolved to transform their organisation into an unit of Communist Party of India. On the tenth anniversary of the Congress declaration of independence as its goal, on 26 January 1940, the new party announced to the public its existence through a massive wall-writing campaign. Thus, Communist Party came to Kerala nearly two decades after the appearance of the first communist groups on the Indian political horizon.

The late formation of CPI in Kerala might appear rather surprising given the fact it was in Malayalam that one of the earliest biographies of Marx in any Indian language came to be published.[8] The October revolution created strong ripples among the Malayali intellectuals. Though few understood the true historic significance of this epochal event it became a source of inspiration to a wide spectrum of intellectuals. To social reformers like K. Aiyyappan it was the social equality of the Soviet revolution that appealed

most.[9] For rationalists like E. Madhavan it was the great victory of anti-religious movement.[10] Yet to some it signalled the dawn of the epoch of Sudras.[11] And so on. However, the knowledge of Marxism was very rudimentary and based on secondary sources. Attempts to apply Marxism to the Indian situation was even more conspicuous by its absence. Most notable event in this respect was the publication of extracts from the statement of the accused in the Meerut Conspiracy case by the 'Communist League' group from Trivandrum in 1931. This pioneering group of communists in Kerala had no organisational contact with communists outside and their direct contribution as a group is largely confined to the above publication.

The industrial backwardness of Kerala and the consequent weakness of the working class was an important reason for the retarded development of the communist organisation in the region. But for a few manufactories in coir, handloom, textiles, tiles, etc. the industrial structure was dominated by small-scale establishments deeply enmeshed within the fabric of rural economy. The industrial workers, drawn from the poorer strata of the peasantry and agricultural labourers, had deep rural roots and were weighed down by the pre-capitalist structures. The few trade unions that had come into existence like Travancore Labour Association were mere philanthropic organisations more concerned with the general aspects of social upliftment rather than workers economic or social interests as a class.[12] The subdued nature of the class struggle in the industrial sector gave no inkling of the potential of the new class whose ideology Marxism represented.

The general weakness of the national movement in Kerala during the first three decades of the century is also an important factor that has to be considered in this context. It must be remembered that it was amongst the ranks of the fighters for national freedom that the message of October Revolution struck a sympathetic chord and drew them into the various pioneer communist groups that were formed in India and abroad. However, in Kerala the political life remained in deep slumber after the anti-British feudal revolts of the first half of the 19th century upto the Home Rule Movement in the post First World War period. Even this was destined to be a brief interlude.

The Non-Cooperation and Khilaphat movements in Malabar drew large sections of peasantry especially the Mappila tenants into the path of agitation. The failure of the leadership, which consisted of superior tenantry with a strong presence of liberal landlords,[13] to resolutely channelise the militancy of the peasantry into anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tracks resulted in its degeneration into a communal flare up and enabled the British to repress it most viciously. The sullen Muslim community presented a fertile soil for seeds of future Muslim communalism. Only deep inter-caste tensions amongst the Hindus prevented a similar Hindu communal consolidation. Within the Congress the two communal factions crystallised around the two newspapers, *Mathrubhumi* and *Al-ameen*. The

national movement slipped into a period of inactivity till the end of the twenties.

The Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 once again galvanised Malabar into action through the personal heroism and enthusiasm of the young Gandhian satyagrahis breaking the salt law or picketting foreign cloth shops and liquor shops. However, the national upsurge was curbed by the leadership once it became evident that mass militancy would trespass the boundaries set by Gandhi's passive resistance tactics. The movement was diverted into constructive work and Harijan Welfare programmes without any direct linkage with the anti-British struggle. The course of the Guruvayur Satyagraha against caste descrimination of Malabar is a relevant instance. Even this struggle which became a focal point of surging militancy was reined in by Gandhi's compromise with the Zamorin of Calicut, the trustee of the temple. The disenchantment of the youth with the Gandhian tactics was evident in the relative failure of the Second Civil Disobedience Campaign in 1932. The Congress leadership in Malabar, the 'Sunday Congressmen' came to be a subject of widespread ridicule.

The search for an alternative by the disillusioned nationalists attracted them to the CSP platform that was emerging at the national level as a left pressure group within Congress. While in jail, the young satyagrahis had come into contact with the representatives of left trends within Congress as well as non Congress nationalists such as the terrorist groups. But they were yet to develop contacts with the communist groups. This perhaps is an important reason for the course of evolution of the young radical nationalists into Congress Socialists rather than communists.[14] It was a wide spectrum of Congressmen that included future anti-socialists and moderates such as Kelappan and C.K. Govindan Nair who joined together at Calicut in May 1934 to form the Malabar unit of CSP. More than the call of socialism it was the urge for an uncompromising anti-imperialist programme of action and the need for a militant party to carry out such a programme that had brought them together.[15] Socialism came to them as "a natural and logical development of revolutionary democracy, they could therefore successfully link up the class struggle of industrial proletariat and its allies with the overall nationalist struggle".[16]

While in jail some among them had begun to develop an understanding of the diverse and even contradictory interests of the various classes that were being drawn into the national struggle. A letter that Krishna Pillai wrote to a comrade soon after the latter's release from the jail in 1930 pointed to a new direction : "Are you with the Congress of the poor or the Congress of the rich ?" If one's loyalty was to the former, then the advice was "to work among the peasants".[17] It was evident that a major weakness of Civil Disobedience Movement was the absence of significant peasant mobilisation. The driving force of the 1930-32 movement had been middle class youth, a good section of whom had been

radicalised through the social reform movements within their communities.[18]

The most important contribution of the CSP lay in integrating the anti-landlord struggle of the peasantry with the national movement in Malabar.[19] The tenancy movement of the 'twenties and the consequent Malabar Tenancy Act catered only to the interests of the superior tenants and had bypassed the mass of peasantry in Malabar who were mostly inferior tenants and agricultural labourers. With no security of tenure and without homesteads and burdened with exhorbitantly high rent share and agricultural debts, their situation was most deplorable. Given the commercialised nature of agriculture their economic condition sharply deteriorated in the thirties with the onset of Depression. To crown it all the revenue settlement of 1929 recommended significant enhancement of the land tax. From the anti-tax campaign the attention of the Congress Socialists gradually shifted to other agrarian issues such as agricultural indebtedness and rent question. A new peasant movement centered around the poor peasantry developed in Malabar demanding reduction in rent and for amending the Tenancy Act in favour of inferior tenants. Village and taluk level kisan committees under an all Malabar 'Karzhaka Sangham' formed the organisational structure of the movement. It was in the northern Malabar notorious for feudal oppression that peasant upsurge was most widespread, militant and violent. Starting with the campaign against illegal feudal exactions and oppressive social customs the peasant movement in the region developed to the brink of a no rent campaign. The Congress Socialists were trying to build their Socialist Bardoli.

Meanwhile a powerful working class movement was also maturing.[20] The Congress Socialists transformed the existing philanthropic workers' associations into militant trade unions and organised numerous new workers' organisations in all industrial centres. During the strike wave of 1935, the Congress Socialists took initiative in organising the first All Kerala Trade Union Conference at Calicut. The second strike wave of 1937 after the formation of Congress ministries revealed heightened maturity of the working class. Their political conciousness was evident from the deliberations of the Second All Kerala Trade Union Conference held at Trichur. With declaration of War and the attendant inflation, the industrial unrest became widespread. By then more than fifty trade unions had come into existence headed by Kerala State Trade Union Council. The emergence of workers as an independent class movement was an important development that hastend the spread of communist ideology among the CSP ranks.

The CSP also took up economic and social problems of the people to build up mass movements. The starvation and unemployment jatha under A.K. Gopalan from Malabar to Madras is an instance of this form of agitation. Among other mass organisations built up by the CSP the most important was the elementary teachers' movement. The village

teachers became the back bone of the library movement and literacy campaign and frequently the chief organisers of political and mass activities in the village. *Literary and art forms were consciously used for developing people's movements and a powerful progressive literary movement emerged.* In short, *in the later half of the thirties Malabar witnessed a cultural awakening and national movement embraced every aspect of life of the people.*

If so much could be achieved while working within the Congress organisation, what was the need for CSP to transform itself into CPI, an independent class party ? It may be noted that within an year of the formation of the CSP in Malabar the leading CSP cadres had been in active contact with CPI and increasingly taken a Marxist-Leninist position in their ideological approach. There was nothing conspiratorial in it as CSP itself had formally accepted Marxist-Leninist ideology and communists were active within the CSP following CSP-CPI accord of 1936. In the consequent ideological struggle within the CSP the Malabar activists tended to gravitate towards the communist group. The most important factor that influenced this shift was the deep respect they had developed towards the achievements of existing socialism in Soviet Union. The deep involvement of mass movements in economic issues generated by the world capitalist crisis of the thirties had led them to look up to the crisis free Soviet development with admiration and as an alternative model for solution of Indian problems. Thus an international outlook was a distinctive characteristic of the Malabar unit of CSP.[21] The secret CPI unit of five leading cadres of the CSP in Malabar that was formed in 1937 also played an important role in rapid dissemination of Marxist-Leninist ideology with in the movement. The CPI national leaders were often invitees to the conferences in Malabar and at times the CPI central leadeship also actively helped to evolve tactics to be adopted in mass struggles, as for example, in the forty day strike of tile workers at Feroke in 1935. Due to such steady and consistent co-operation in ideology and agitation the transition from CSP into CPI created no disharmony whatsoever within the organisation. It was accepted as a natural course of development.

The need for a new type of organisation both in its organisational character as well as ideological clarity was a deeply felt need of the CSP activists.[22] It was clear that the platform of CSP to work within the organisational discipline and programmatic understanding of Congress was becoming a hinderance to the further growth of the class organisations in Malabar as well as the fight against compromise tactics pursued by Congress leadership. Thus for example, the peasant movement in Northern Malabar that had developed into a no rent campaign had to be diverted to a campaign for ammending the Tenancy Act. The reason was that it was not possible to raise the slogan of abolition of landlordism from the platform of Congress. For the sake of unity of the Congress organisation even the suggestion of separate volunteer corps for the peasant movement

had to be given up.[23] To quote EMS, "In other words, working class and peasant organisations were looked upon not as mass political organisations operating independently of, and if necessary in opposition to, the bourgeois leadership of the national movement, but as the vehicles through which the workers and peasants are mobilized behind that leadership. The ideological root of such tailing behind the bourgeoisie was the failure to see the crucial role of peasantry under the leadership of the working class in the national revolution : the failure to see that the agrarian revolution is the axle around which the wheel of national revolution turns : that only the working class, headed by the Communist Party, can successfully lead the agrarian and hence the national revolution".[28]

Despite this ideological weakness, the CSP succeeded to a very great extent in transforming the Congress into a genuine anti-imperialist united front. It was achieved through determined struggle against the Gandhian right within Congress who tried in every manner including organisational disruption to prevent the ascendancy of CSP within the Congress and the independent growth of class and mass organisations. Through non-co-operation pressure tactics and manouvres facilitated by the changes in Congress constitution, they ousted the CSP from the leadership of KPCC in 1934. The plan of the rightist leadership to decimate the CSP's hold in the lower levels through disciplinary proceedings was given up only due to the requirements of electoral mobilisation in 1936. However, with consistent work at the grass root level, by building up a widespread net work of village Congress Committees and tactical alliance with the nationalist Muslim faction within the Congress, the CSP was once again able to capture leadership of the KPCC in 1938. The Gandhian offensive against the left in the Tripura Congress came to the help of the right in Malabar. With the outbreak of the War and the CPI tactics of unconditional resistance to war efforts; the struggle between the Gandhians and the socialists reached a new high pitch. There was an uptide in peasant and workers agitations and widespread police repression in Malabar. Mass mobilisation, conducted despite the disapproval of the right leadership on Anti-Repression Day on 15 September 1939 led to violent confrontations in many centres with the police. The incidents provided the rightists with an opportunity to carry out a purge to cleanse the Congress organisation of the communists ; the Malabar District Committee of KPCC was disbanded, leftist KPCC was superceded and the rightists placed firmly in the saddle. The organisational break of CPI and Congress in Malabar was complete.

The Communist Party in Travancore-Cochin

From Congress Gandhians to Congress Socialists and thence to Communists—such was the path traversed by the radical nationalists of Malabar in the twenties and the thirties. The transition in the princely states of Travancore and Cochin was much more diverse and complex.

The preconditions to modernisation were much more strong in th southern Kerala than in Malabar region. The traditional Janmi system especially in Travancore, had been largely abolished during the process o emergence of centralised monarchy in the 18th century itself. The pressure from the tenants forced protective regulations even in areas where rentie classes survived. All these created a powerful stratum of prosperous pro prietary farmers who became agents for rapid development of commercia agriculture, agro-processing industries and commerce as well as pressure groups for the extension of infrastructural facilities such as transport health care system and modern education.[24] The traditional social struc tures and institutions such as inheritance system and family structure a well as extravagant customs connected birth, marriage and death ceremo nies, etc. became impediments in the path of further progress of these nascent capitalist forces. This was the background of the social reform movements that emerged in all castes and communities from the lowest to the highest from the later half of the 19th century.

The Ezhava social reform movement was the most radical aspect of this social awakening that accompanied the rise of capitalism.[25] The movement that was initiated as a sankritisation campaign by Sree Narayana Guru, later, developed into a campaign for interdining and inter-marriage and even rationalism and atheism. Sree Narayana Guru became a source of legitimacy for Ezhava reformers and radicals of all hues and colours. The radicals transformed his sutra : "One caste, one religion, and one God for man" into a new slogan : "No caste, no religion and no God for man ! Such was the course of development of radical democratic thought. The widespread dissemination of the radical interpretations of Guru's teachings played an important role in the emergence of the modern democratic consciousness in Kerala.

The above national awakening also found expression at the political level. The submission of the Malayali Memorial to the Maharaja in 1891, jointly by all the Malayali communities, protesting against state patronage enjoyed by Tamil Brahmins in Travancore was the most notable of such events. It marked the entry of Malayali middle class into the political life of Travancore. The constitution and functioning of the Legislative Council and Sree Mulam Popular Assembly were also a source of political ferment. Swadeshabhimani Ramakrishna Pillai, who single handedly carried on a campaign against administrative corruption and inefficiency through the columns of his journal had to be deported from Travancore. Gandhian era brought the Congress committees to Travancore. A good number of Congress men from Travancore participated in the political conference at Ottappalam in 1921. The spread of nationalist sentiments formed the background to the student agitation of 1922. The rapidity with which it spread throughout Travancore and the resilence it exhibited against repression suggests a widespread formal and informal network of nationalist activists.[26] All these reveal the potential for natio-

nalist political mobilisation that existed in the princely states—a duty from which Congress leadership shrank away.

The Vaikam Satyagraha agitation in 1924 was the last direct intervention of Congress leadership in the political development of Travancore till the end of the thirties. The Satyagraha was a continuation of the long drawn out struggles conducted by the non-svarna castes and communities for the basic civil liberties, such as right to dress accorting to ones own fashion, carry umbrellas, wear ornaments, travel on public roads, worship in public temples, public education and employment etc. There were also numerous occasions of fairly widespread violent confrontations with the savarnas and the aggrieved communities. The emergence of the middle class leadership gave these struggles a consistency and direction which were absent in the early spontaneous revolts against caste oppression. The struggles for civil liberties also began to gain support and even active participation of the democratic sections amongst the savarnas. Thus for example, the struggle of Christians and Muslims and lower castes against denial of employment in the Revenue Department was led by the Civic Rights League (1919-1922) one of the prominent leaders of which was Changanachery Parameswaran Pillai, a savarna by caste.

At the initiative of Ezhava caste leaders like T.K. Madhavan, Indian National Congress chose to sponsor the satyagraha struggle at Vaikom Temple. On Gandhiji's advice the demand of the avarnas to enter the temples was scaled down to the right to walk through the roads adjacent to the temple. Despite Gandhiji's personal interventions and the nationwide support to the struggle, after dragging on for nearly two years, it met with a subdued end. It created widespread disenchantment among Ezhavas about Gandhian tactics as well as his theories on 'Varnasrama Dharma'. Congress fully withdrew into its constructive work creating a political vacuum in the state and a situation for political fragmentation on communal lines.

The communalisation of Travancore politics is a matter that deserves closer scrutiny. Social reform movements within various castes and communities were a characteristic feature of the first phase of the modern national awakening even in Malabar, though on a weaker scale. But with the emergence of the Congress and the mass and class organisations they were submerged within the general anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles. Struggle against caste opresssion was an important task taken up by the peasant movements in Malabar. The Congress policy of non-interference in the affairs of princely states contributed to thwarting the emergence of similar secular national platforms for the cause of caste oppressed in Travancore. It should be noted that the resentment against caste discrimination and savarna domination was much stronger in Travancore given the higher level of economic development and capitalist relations in the region. Trapped in the old world, Nair aristocracy could not take advantage of the possibilities of enrichment that capitalism offered. The

new social classes of rich farmers, traders, industrialists and professional emerged not from the traditional dominant castes but from the non-Hind communities such as Muslims and Christians or avarna caste like Ezhavas Their efforts to gain a social status and political leverage more befitting t their improved economic conditions inevitably led to political question given the Hindu princely order closely linked to the caste hirearchy. Th absence of a secular platform diverted the struggles of the non-dominan castes and communities into communal channels severely eroding the secu lar unity forged during 1919-24 period.

Thus, when the constitutional reforms for 1932 were announced a national movement for 'responsible government' could not be launched despite the widespread awareness of the inadequacies of the reforms. Th attention of the Ezhava, Christian and Muslim leaders was on the nea monopoly of representation in the Legislature that the savarnas enjoyed and would continue to enjoy given the restricted nature of the franchise The caste and communal organisations in these communities formed a 'Joint Political Congress' demanding reservation in legislative representa tion and public employment. They successfully boycotted the election conducted under the new constitution. The sweep of the struggle as wel as the threat of mass conversion of Ezhavas to Christianity forced the administration to come to terms with the agitationists. Communal reser vations were guaranteed and public temples were thrown open to all Hindu castes.

However, the communal passions aroused by the movement vitiated the political atmosphere. Nair aristocracy threatened of its traditiona privileges fanned up Nair communal passions against the Christian capita lists who were buying up their land and prestige. The Congress nationa lists generally denounced the Abstention Movement and its demands as anti-national. However, the CSP in Malabar who argued for active intervention of Congress in the politics of princely states, extended support to the Abstention Movement despite its communal overtones. It correctly perceived the importance of linking up the struggle against savarna domination with the national movement. At the same time the CSP strived for the creation of mass and class organisations cutting across barriers of caste and community. Thus, when at the successful conclusion of the Abstention Movement, the leaders of Joint Political Congress and savarna nationalists attempted to forge a common front—Travancore State Congres—to fight for the 'responsible government', the CSP warmly welcomed the move and attempted to rally the democratic sections under the banner of the State Congress. When the State Congress started a civil disobedience movement in August 1938, the left KPCC came out in active support of the struggle by organising solidarity jathas to Travancore and setting up a Travancore Struggle Aid Committee across the border in Cochin.

The most important contribution of the CSP to the political development of Travancore was the leadership it provided for the emergence of an

independent working class movement. Unlike Malabar a militant peasant movement did not develop in Travancore. Only notable development was a movement of coconut cultivators protesting the fall in coconut prices.[27] The CSP lacked a perspective on how to develop peasant movement in a region where tenancy was not the major problem. Therefore its intervention in developing class movements was mostly confined to the industrial sector. Through the all Kerela trade union conferences, central trade union councils and deputation of cadres from Malabar to the working class centres in Travancore, the CSP actively guided the development of the trade union movement. Its most notable success was in Alleppy, the chief port town and centre of coir and oil industry of Travancore.

At the time of entry of the CSP into Alleppey the Travancore Labour Association had already transformed itself into a militant trade union under the pressure from the ranks due to the severe deterioration of economic conditions. However, despite the growth of a militant trade union movement on larger issues of state and society they were being led by caste and communal groups. The workers, most of whom were drawn from the Ezhava caste, were actively involved in the various anti-savarna movements and were strongly influenced by the radical streams within them. We have documented in great detail, elsewhere, the process through which the dichotomy in the life of working class—as a member of a class at the work place and as a member of a caste outside the work place—came to be bridged and how the anti-savarna struggle became but one aspect of the general working class struggle for democracy.[28] It was made possible by the platform of the CSP that held the anti-savarna struggle to be a political task of the working class and active intervention on the basis of this platform. And this transformation was facilitated by the intensification of class struggle within coir industry, the accentuation of class polarisation within the Ezhava caste and the increasing domination of conservative trends within the caste movement in the later half of the thirties as its middle class leadership sought a relationship of accommodation with the establishment.

The CSP sought to link up the rising tempo of working class struggle at Alleppy to the agitation for 'responsible government' launched by the State Congress. The whole state of Travancore was in turmoil, the agitation in certain centres creating even a situation of armed confrontation between peasants and the police. Under the guidance of a group of CSP activists from Malabar led by P. Krishna Pillai the coir workers prepared themselves for a general strike not merely for economic but also political demands. Such was the impact of the intense political campaign that when the strike actually began on 21 October 1938 it was more in the nature of a political strike in support of the demands raised by the State Congress.

Meanwhile the government was trying to reach a compromise with the State Congress leadership. It tried to pacify the State Congress leaders

by releasing the political prisoners. Though none of the other demands of the State Congress was conceded the leadership allowed the tempo of agitation to wane. The campaign was virtually reduced to reception meetings for the released political leaders—in various parts of the state. The movement came to a stand still when at the insistence of Gandhiji the State Congress leaders withdrew the Memorandum submitted to the Maharaja because it contained personal allegations against the Dewan.

It created great resentment among the radicals in the State Congress especially the members of the Youth League. They resolved to resubmit the Memorandum in defiance of Gandhiji and once again launch the agitation. The position adopted by the CSP at this crucial juncture, underlined the limitation of a left platform working within the discipline of the Congress organisation.[29] Despite the open knowledge that a sizeable section of the State Congress itself was in support of the position of the Youth League, the CSP fearing an open break with the nationalist leadership came out against agitational plan of the Youth League. The radicals reluctantly submitted to the persuasian of the CSP leaders.

While the bourgeois leadership of the State Congress surrendered themselves before the administration, the working class of Alleppy who had struck work in support of them held out steadfast in the path of struggle braving vicious repression let loose by police and military. Finally, in the middle of November due to the manouvres of the moderate trade union leaders who had become active in Alleppy after their release from the jail the struggle had to be withdrawn. Though the workers returned to the factories, the moderate leaders were thoroughly discredited before the mass of workers. A new crop of class conscious cadres, steeled in the struggle rose to the leadership of the movement. The strike also proved to be a school of mass education for the workers. In his review report of the struggle P. Krishna Pillai noted how the reign of police terror convinced even the most backward sections of the workers of the repressive class nature of the state.[30] The workers also began to perceive their interests as distinct from the bourgeois State Congress leadership who had virtually ignored the strike after the compromise of October 23. The general strike of 1938 signified the entry of the working class as an independent political force in the national struggle in Travancore.

The determination of the Alleppey workers to continue their struggle against all odds won the admiration of the Youth Leaguers and the radical elements within the State Congress who were disillusioned by the vacillations of the bourgeois leadership.[31] The solidarity campaign started by these radical elements brought them into close contact with the working class movement. This collaboration led to the formation of the 'Radical Group' in May 1939, with M.N. Govindan Nair as the secretary. The Radical Group was to function as an organised socialist faction within the State Congress on the lines of the CSP in Malabar. The members of the Radical Group, except for a small faction led by N. Sreekantan Nair,

became the leading core of the CPI in Travancore in 1940. After the experience of 1938 the radicals did not require to be persuaded to shift their loyalty to an independent working class party in order to take the movement forward.

The broad contours of economic and political development of Cochin was similar to those of Travancore.[32] One may discern two significant differences. Firstly due to the higher incidence of 'tenancy, unlike in Travancore, peasant associations were more active in Cochin. At the end of the twenties itself tenant's movement had developed in many parts of the state. However, systematic attempt at organising the peasantry started only in 1930 with the establishment of Cochin Karzhaka Sabha under the initiative of the communists. Secondly, unlike in Travancore the struggle for 'responsible government' did not gain momentum in Cochin. The government was able to appease the State People Movement leaders with certain nominal constitutional concession. It was at the initiative of the radical nationalists and communists that 'Cochin Praja Mandalam' was formed in 1941. Despite the political lullness, the influence of the CSP was stronger in Cochin due to the greater proximity to Malabar. The CSP was active especially in working class organisations in Cochin like the Labour Brotherhood of Trichur, right from the middle of the thirties. It was these CSP cadres who constituted the base of CPI in Cochin.

The Second World War and the CPI in Kerala

As we have already noted, the immediate background of the formation of the CPI in Kerala was the sharp clash within the national movement regarding the tactics to be adopted to exploit the crisis created by the outbreak of the Second World War. The widespread agrarian unrest in Malbar that resulted in numerous violent confrontations with the police and landlords as well as the working class struggles for wage increase were also a reflection of the line of unconditional resistance to the imperialist war adopted by the CPI. The consequent police repression and preventive detention of cadres and the fact that the CPI was an illegal party, forced the young communists in Kerala to adopt underground organisational forms and new styles of mass work. Thus, the first phase of the War rapidly transformed the loose and open organisational structure of the CSP into a communist party of 'steel discipline' (-a phrase that gained wide currency in Malayalam).

It was this steel discipline as well as the ardent admiration that the Kerala commmunists always had for the Soviet Union that enabled them to tide over the confusion created by the new tactics adopted by the CPI during the second phase of the War After the German aggression against Soviet Union, the course of War in the Soviet front became a major issue of propaganda in every communist campaign and struggle in Kerala. However, there was no slackening of anti-British campaign or struggles on

mass issues. The support to the war efforts was conditional on Britain conceding the demands of Indian national movement. It was only by January-February of 1942 that the communists in Kerala fully grasped the implications in the change of the character of the War and began to apply the tactics of unconditional support to the war efforts.[33] The insufficient appreciation of the significance of the new international corelation of class forces after the emergence of the socialist camp to the inter-imperialist contradictions and imperialist wars in the CPI's analysis of the first phase of the war, made the transition from unconditional opposition to unconditional support to war efforts appear mechanical and a painful adjustment. While there was no doubt in the mind of any communist on the need to rally to the defense of international socialism, there was much confusion as how to link up this international task with the struggle for national liberation. The party failed to take into account the patriotic motives of *the masses and leaders in the Quit India Movement while evolving tactics* to oppose their disruption.

The above sectarian weakness of the CPI tactics on which there is an abundance of criticism and self criticism is only one aspect of the problem. Equally serious was the failure of the CPI to expose the Quite India Movement as only a moment in the 'compromise-struggle-compromise' strategy adopted by the bourgeois leadership throughout the national struggle. Even when Gandhiji initiated the compromise talks within months of his call for the final struggle, the CPI efforts were to utilise the opportunity only to expose the socialists who still clung on to the struggle that was already fizzling out. The illusions that the CPI leadership harboured in the bourgeois national leadership was evident in its fervent campaign for Congress-League unity which was considered a pre-condition and guarantee for the formation of a national government. The distortions in the thesis on national question in India also contributed to the wrong tactics adopted towards the Muslims League. In Kerala, in the name of people's unity a line of collaboration with various caste and communal organisations was worked out. It also prevented the party from preparing consciously for the challenges of post war upsurge and the inevitable retreat of imperialism from the sub-contiment. It is worthwhile to ponder if it was not this latter aspect of CPI policy in the People's War period that affected the advance of communists in Kerala more adversely than the sectarian mistakes.

Thouge the masses at large, especially in the initial period, found it difficult to fully appreciate the change in CPI tactics, the wild accusations of the Congress leaders about the communists being the agents of British and so on were never taken seriously. Kerala communists possessed one great asset—they were the leaders of national movement in Kerala. Further, the Quit India movement did not gather momentum in Kerala for various reasons. The CSP cadres who constituted the militant section within the Congress had enbloc joined the CPI. What was left of the

Congress organisation was too weak to organise the agitation. The position of Rajaji and his group further weakened the agitationalists. If this was the case of the Congress organisation in Malabar the situation in the princely states was even worse. In Travancore after the compromise of 1938 the State Congress had become virtually defunct, torn asunder by various communal and personal rivalaries as well as dismemberment of the rank and file. In short, the nationalist current against which CPI had to swim was much weaker in Kerala than India at large.

All these are not to suggest that the tactics of opposition to Quit India movement did not create any adverse long term consequences. It created for the first time a generation of leftists in Kerala who were anti-comunists.[34] After the independence they formed the base for Revolutionary Socialist Party and Kerala Socialist Party, a serious challenge from the left for the advance of the communist movement. Another development with equally far reaching consequences was the splintering of the mass movements. To counter the mass influence of the communists the Congress pursued a policy of splitting the existing mass organisations or setting up rival ones. Thus National Labour Union, Student Congress, Kisan Congress, etc. came into existence. The same policy was followed by the non-communist left within the trade union movement and became the major influence at least in one working class centre i.e. Quilon, in southern Travancore.

There was also a temporary isolation from a good section of the nationalist masses which was indeed a matter of deep concern and frustration within the party cadres who had just emerged from the ranks of Congress socialism. However, through dedicated work they were able to overcome this isolation. Judging from the increase in the party membership, the membership of the mass organisations, the sales of party literature, the circulation of the party joural 'Deshabhimani' the response to the fund collection drives etc. in no way can the war period be considered a period of setback for the CPI in Kerala.[35] The party was successsful in consolidating its influence and make significant inroads especially in the southern Kerala. A number of factors contributed to the success of the CPI during this difficult phase of its growth.

An important factor was that it was not laid down with "production disease" of the war period that had infected the party at large in India. Though the production policy constituted the main link in kisan and trade union fronts, the cadres exhibited great skill, especially in working class centres like Alleppey, in adopting tactics that ensured the fulfillment of day to day demands of the masses without taking recourse to forms of struggles that would have disrupted the war efforts seriously.[36] There was significant increase in the shop floor level trade union activity and mass participation in the functioning of the unions. The coir workers unions utilised every legal facility provided by the various factory legislations enacted in Travancore as well as institutions of collective bargaining that had been

set up following the general strike of 1938 to secure the interests of the workers. Despite the fact that Alleppy maintained industrial peace throughout the people's war period, the economic gains by the coir workers were in no way lower than in Quilon where the non-communist left was the major influence.

The communists were in the forefront of every activity that could give relief to the distress caused by the war such as famine, scaricty of necessaries like cloth and kerosene, outbreak of epidemics, natural calamities etc. Kerala being a chronically grain deficit region, the disruption of supply routes due to the hostilities created near famine conditions. The CPI worked out concrete proposals for the procurement of grain stocks and statutory rationing and organised mass campaigns for their implementation.[37] When the rationing was introduced, the party once again came to forefront to expose its inefficiencies and agitate for remedial measures. The relief work taken up by the party also won wide spread admiration.

The war period was also a phase of intense political activity. Every opportunity provided by the newly granted legality to the party was used to educate the masses. Special attention was paid to the development of women's movement. The party publishing house, party school, cultural squads etc. gave a new thrust to the feverish political activity. The relief work was no more philanthropic effort. The landlords and hoarders were the target of the food campaigns. The grow more food campaign brought to the fore the land question. The Anti-Jap Melas stressed the need for the establishment of a national government for the success of the defense efforts. Prominent were also the campaigns to release the national leaders and the condemned in Kayyur and Morazha cases. So much so, the British Collector of Malabar considered the communists to be "generally intolerable friends of the government".[38]

The Post-War Revolutionary Upsurge : the Punnapra-Vaylar Struggle

A development of the war period that had important implications for the post-war practice was the crystallisation of the CPI's approach towards the national question in Kerala. The CPI which had already brought the three regions of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore under a unified regional political leadership and an all Kerala trade union movement, put forward as a practical slogan the formation of a United Kerala consisting of the Malayalam speaking areas in the above three regions. The struggle for United Kerala was to be an inseparable part of the struggle of the people for national freedom and the liquidation of feudal monarchies. The perspective of the CPI enabled it ride on the crest of the wave of Malayali national feeling as well as cultural movement in the post war years. It also enabled the CPI to rise to the leadership of the post war upsurge in struggles, particularly, in Travancore where the feudal monarchy was scheming to create an 'Independent Travancore'.

In Malabar the CPI's main thrust was in the agrarian sector. The campaign against hoarders and for forcible occupation of waste lands led to the violent confrontations, such as at Karivallur and Kavumbai. Preventive detentions, ban on the party journal and the widespread deployment of Malabar Special Police raised the agrarian unrest to a new pitch. However, the CPI failed to link up these struggles with strike actions of the workers or co-ordinate them into a general political struggle. It was only by the middle of 1946, that the CPI national leadership realised the sweep of the post War upsurge in struggles as evidenced in the outbursts in Thebaga, Worli, Telengana and the RIN Mutiny and worked out the "main slogans of developing the partial struggles for the achievement of democratic revolution and seizure of power by the people".[39] It was only in August 1946 that the Central Committee of the CPI sharply warned against the attempts of national bourgeoisie to compromise with imperialism and pointed out the revolutionary significance of the spontaneous struggles that were breaking out It called on the party to develop them into "local battles" and "raise the question of state power".[40]

The Punnapra-Vayalar Struggle (named after the two main centres on confrontation near Alleppy, in Travancore) should be situated in the above context.[41] This struggle was one of the rare events in the history of Indian working class movement when the industrial workers not only programmatically but also physically led an armed movement of the rural masses.

How were the coir workers able to achieve the hegemony over the rural masses ? The most important factor was the high level of political consciousness exhibited by the Alleppey trade unions in consistently and directly taking up the issues of the rural masses such as the demands of the farmers, famine relief measures, subsidised public distribution of necessaries and so on, along with their own demands and linking them all up with the larger political goals. The coir trade union activists were instrumental in building up the net work of trade unions, peasant organisations and fishermen associations in the country side. Such was the prestige of the coir worker unions that the union committees came to replace the former Ezhava caste panchayats for settling the intra-caste disputes. It was claimed that 90 percent of the disputes among the people in the rural areas were settled though union arbitration during the 1944-46 period. And finally, a well knit communist party organisation existed in Alleppey region that closely linked the urban and rural movements.

The relatively higher incidence of landlordism and feudal vestiges in the region compared to the other parts of Travancore, the tyranical overlordship of the traditional communal elite over the poor fishermen of the Catholic community, the famine conditions and acute unemployment, all provided a fertile soil for the fast development of the revolutionary movement in the countryside. Threatened, the rural reaction attempted to terrorise the workers into submission. The workers retaliated, sporadically

in the beginning and later in a more organised manner. It led to the entry military into the area to meet the 'communist menace' in the first we of September 1946. With the approach of the harvest season the tensic and repression escalated forcing the terror stricken workers in many loca ties to flee from their homesteads to areas where the movement w stronger and set up camps for self-protection.

The mounting tension and unrest in the Alleppey countryside coincid with the shift in the CPI policy at the national level. The August resoluti aptly reflected the situation that was developing in Travancore. The St Congress had refused to come out resolutely against the constitution reforms that sought to perpetuate the monarchy and the Dewans rule well as against the machinations of the Dewan to keep Travancore out free India. A section of the bourgeois national movement had also start toying with the suggestion to give the reforms a fair trial. It was in tl context that the CPI came forward with the slogan 'Throw the Americ Model into the Arabian Sea'. The trade union movement in Allepp was in the forefront of the campaign. They spurned aside the Dewa offer for major economic concessions including the grant of statutory bor (defined as deffered wages) if workers would withdraw from the politi agitations.

The party leadership in Travancore closely following the CPI's n tactical line tried to link up the fierce partial struggles in Alleppey count side with the general political struggles for a final onslaught on the feu monarchy. A mass agitation on the scale of 1938 was envisaged. Howev unlike in 1938, the organised working class through a general strike over Travancore was to spear head the struggle. The self defence car that had developed in the Alleppey countryside were sought to be trai formed into volunteer camps where the workers were to be given traini in close physical combat and military manoeuvres

The general strike began on October 22nd. It was evident from t beginning that the strategy had failed. Not only did the State Congr not support the agitation, as the liberal national leaders had promised, t a section of them came out openly against the uprising. Thus the sta wide mass agitation never materialised. Even the general strike was complete success only in Alleppey as the non-communist left develop cold feet at the moment. Thus the Alleppey workers were isolated. Mart law was declared in the region and the military reinforcements moved ir Alleppey. In the large scale military operations mounted against the volt teer camps around 600 cadres and people were gunned down. Desp the self sacrificing heroism and the political determination of the worke all resistence was ruthlessly suppressed in a period of less than a week.

The crucial flaw was the failure to ensure a state wide agitation in 1938. The optimism regarding the development of the mass agitati sprang from the illusions that the CPI entertained about a major section the State Congress leaders joining the struggle. The party also over es

mated its own preparedness to organise such a moment. The tactics adopted in the struggle closely corresponded to the "general strike and mass insurrection model". The static volunteer camps were a total negation of the whole concept of mobile guerilla squads. The poorly armed masses in crowds were pitted against the heavily armed military in pitched battles with disastrous results.[42]

Despite these weaknesses, the Punnapra-Vayalar uprising was the peak point of the national movement in Kerala. It sealed the fate of the monarchy in Travancore. More importantly, it signified the maturing of the working class that had emerged as an independent political force in 1938 into the leadership of the national movement in 1946. This status and prestige that the working class enjoyed on the eve of the independence, was an important factor that facilitated the rapid spread of the CPI in the 'fifties.

Conclusion

We have briefly surveyed the development of the national movement and the communist party in Kerala. The lineage of the CPI was traced to the emergence of left tendencies within the Congress as well as in the non-Congress movements (especially in Travancore-Cochin) and the crystallisation of the former into the Congress Socialist Party. The Communists in Kerala came through Congress Socialism. They had risen to the leadership in the national upsurge at the end of the 'thirties. In this sense they were fortunate in escaping the phase of extreme sectarianism that characterised the tactics of CPI at the end of the 'twenties due to its grave underestimation of the anti-imperialist potential of Indian bourgeois class. The Congress Socialists in Malabar moved towards the CPI positions out of their own experiences regarding the limitations of Congress movement in carrying the national movement forward (e.g., the disruption of Travancore struggle in 1938, the tactics adopted at the outbreak of the War, etc.) as well as the further growth of the mass movements (e.g., the question of no rent campaign in Malabar) aided by their international outlook and the CPI national leadership. It is significant that the 90 leading cadres of CSP who assembled in Pinarai in 1939 were unanimous in their decision to transform their organisation into a unit of the Communist Party of India.

The experience of Kerala in the 'forties underlines the need for a party of the working class to develop the peasants and workers into independent class forces (not only in an economic sense but also politically) and establish the hegemony of the working class over the national united front. The Leninist concept of the vanguard role of the party has an extra significance in the case of countries like India for the following two reasons : (a) The formation of the working class takes place amidst the pervasive prevalence of precapitalist relations and ideology that tend to obscure the emerging class contradictions and compartmentalise expe-

riences, (b) the formation of the working class takes place in a colon country where the struggle for national freedom is the main trend of soc development in which the national bourgeoisie has also an importa role to perform. All these tend to impede the development of worki class into class for itself and necessitates constant conscious intervention a struggle by the party of the working class. The fact that such a party cai to function in a systematic manner only by around the mid-thirties the most important single factor that impeded the development of worki class hegemony over the Indian national movement. And as a consequen the liquidation of imperialist exploitation and the landlordism continues be on the agenda of India's democratic movement.

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India's Freedom Struggle

IN ex-colonial countries the formation of a nation and the growth of national consciousness takes place in the course of struggle against foreign rule. India was not a nation in the modern sense, when it was conquered by the British. This is a historical truth and should not be treated as denigration of our people. Neither England nor France for that matter were modern nations before the rise of capitalism in these countries. They became nations, when the rising capitalist class overthrew feudal rule, abolished feudal relations, and integrated the country into single economic units for purpose of commodity exchange, etc.

However the fact that India was not a nation in this sense does not mean that the Indian people were alien to each other, with nothing in common between the peoples of various parts and regions. There was a history of common culture, outlook, ideological traditions and the firm idea that India extended from one end of the country to another. The common culture reinforced by modern convictions of economic unity helped the people to unite against the British.

It was natural and inevitable that in the early years of our national struggle, leaders emphasised that India was always one nation. But we should know that this was not so, that the process of nation building is still going on. We should bear in mind that no country of such immense dimensions as India was conquered for the foreigners by its own army as our country was. It took nearly a century after the introduction of British rule to organise a national resistance to the enslaver.

When the people of a country have to fight a foreign ruler the illusion of a complete homogeniety in the ranks is easily created. No thought is given to the role of various interests and their relation to the foreign ruler. Few analyse the old social situation in which the country could be enslaved. If at all this is done, it is regarded as irrelevant, as problems to be hushed away by saying that all these will be settled once the country is free. No effort is made to demarcate those whose interests run counter to the ultimate interests of the people and ensure that they do not affect the shape, the destiny of the struggle.

The struggle for the formation of a nation cannot start without the

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existence of a modicum of capitalist relations. It is therefore inevita that where capitalist relations are weak, where the modern working cl exists in small number and its consciousness is still dominated by the structure, the struggle for the formation of a nation is increasingly led the intellectuals representing the new bourgeois democratic values. ' then the struggle against foreign rule remains compartmentalised ε though it sometimes takes the form of a national revolt, lacks a cohes ideology and programme to sustain it over the years.

This as we will presently see was the experience of India. The rev(of Indian soldiers in the British army represented a hatred of the foreig and a desire to drive them out. Yet they cannot be said to possess popu national consciousness. The process was developing through the very a of the British—through the steps they had to take to introduce mod(means of communication and exploitation.

Marx said that, without intending to do so, the British were beco ing the instrument of Indian regeneration :

> The historic pages of their rule in India report hardly anythi beyond that destruction. The work of regeneration hardly transpi through a heap of mines but nevertheless it has begun.
>
> The political unity of India more consolidated and extending fartl than it ever did under the Great Moghuls, was the first condition its regeneration. That unity, imposed by the British sword will n(be strengthened and perpetuated by the electric telegraph. T native army, organised and trained by the British drill sergeant, w the *sine qua non* of Indian self-emancipation, and of India ceasing be the prey of the first foreign intruder. The free press, introduc(for the first time into Asiatic society, and managed principally l the common offspring of Hindus and Europeans is a new and powe ful agent of reconstruction. The zamindari and ryotwari themselv(abominable as they are, involve two distinct forms of private pr perty in land—the great desideratum of Asiatic Society. From tl Indian natives reluctantly and sparingly educated at Calcutta, und(English superintendence, a fresh class is springing up, endowed wi requirements for government and imbued with European science.

Marx further observed :

> But when you have once introduced machinery into the locomotio of a country, which possesses iron and coal, you are unable to witl hold it from its fabrication. You cannot maintain a net of railways ov(an immense country without introducing all these industrial process(necessary to meet the immediate wants of railway locomotion an out of which there must grow application of machinery to thos branches of industry not immediately connected with railways. Th railway system will therefore become in India, truly the fore-runne of modern industries. . . .Modern industry resulting from the railwa; system will dissolve the hereditary divisions of labour upon whicl

rest the Indian castes, these decisive impediments to Indian progress and Indian power.

Marx in these two passages was describing the process of capitalist development—the condition for the formation of a nation in India.

In dealing with the freedom struggle of our country we are dealing with one of the most outstanding events of the 20th century, a historic event of world importance. The Russian Revolution of 1917, the anti-Nazi victory of the USSR in the Second World War, the successful Chinese revolution and the liberation of India have contributed to changing the political landscape of the world. The first three events of course had much more far-reaching effects on world history. The first two victories contributed in a big way to the achievement of Indian independence, and this achievement by the Indian people further unleashed such huge forces which weakened the enslaving forces of world imperialism and contributed to the collapse of the colonial system. A proper assessment of all those who contributed to this achievement and of those who with justification claimed the leadership of the struggle is necessary to understand the growth and maturing of this historic event. Further, a correct historical perspective on the national struggle will emerge only if it is taken in conjunction with its sequel—the post-independent history of India, characterised by the immiserisation of our people, the monstrous rise of unemployment, pervasive corruption, the growing collapse of all the values assiduously nurtured during the national struggle, the rise of communal and divisive forces and threats of dismemberment and disruption. The disappointment of the people is exploited by reactionaries to denigrate the achievements of freedom ; to belittle the sacrifices of the people. There are scribes who portray as if freedom was a gift of the rulers and not the triumph of the Indian people.

The concerted attempt to kill national patriotic sentiments is indirectly helped by the ruling Congress party when it denies the role of the masses and gives credit only to certain leaders for achieving Indian freedom.

II

1857 War of Independence

The 1857 War of Independence was an inspiring story of armed resistance against British enslavement and misrule. Through the 18th and 19th Century a series of struggles against the British occurred. This period of militant struggles started with the Sanyasi Rebellions (1763-1800) round which centered Bankim Chatterjee's famous novel *Anand Math* and continued till the Birsa Rebellion (1890-1900).

From Garo to Lushai Hills to Trivandrum in the South, from Cutch in the West to Rajamundhri on the Eastern Coast, people were involved

in the fight at one time or other during the course of these hundred years.

The 19th century saw a number of armed mutinies of Indian soldier against the British. The earliest mutiny was in 1824-25 by soldiers who were to be despatched to Burma. The apparent reason was that they did not want to be despatched by sea route. The sepoys besides made a demand for increased allowance. However, it is evident that a strong anti-British current was developing in the country. The Press Regulations of 1823 added to the fire and it was widely believed in official circles that Ram Mohan Roy's appeal for the Freedom of the Press was a source of the inspiration for the rebels. The mutiny spread beyond Barakpur (in Bengal). Mutiny was crushed but the discontentment could not be suppressed. Another protest developed in 1827-28 concentrating round Calcutta and directed against the Stamp Duties Regulations Act of the Company. The people should not be taxed without their consent was the slogan. (Ashok Lal Ghosh, *British India's First Freedom Movement*—1820-1830).

What was the source of this desperate resistance? It was a period when the British East India Company was carrying on its robbery of the people, without any pretence to law or rules. It was soon followed by imports of products of British cotton industry, which shattered the union of agriculture and industry in India, imposing unspeakable misery on millions.

In the beginning the rapacious Company attacked all interests, the peasants, handicraftmanship, merchants, landlords and feudal princes—all were the victms of its piracy. Exhorbitant demands were made on the landlords and feudal princes to serve as an excuse for depriving them of their properties and principalities. To meet the Company's demands they intensified the oppression of the peasants. Merchants' houses were often raided, peasants and weavers were treated as serfs. Territories of ruling princes who were without an issue were absorbed in the extending domination of the British.

It was because of this exploitation of all, that landlords and peasants, feudal princes and subjects often fought together against the British. Their ranks were strengthened by the disbanded Moghul and other feudal armies. However, as days passed, the peasants got involved in a simultaneous fight with the foreign rulers and the landlords.

The figures that emerged in these stormy struggles constitute a spectrum of the entire society. Adivasis, peasants, religious reformers, disbanded soldiers, ministers of feudal princes, all appear on the stage. Heroic figures such as Majanu Saha, Bhawani Pathak, Devi Choudharani (all leaders of the Sanyasi Rebellion), Vijaya Rama Raja of Vishakhapatnam, Wazir Ali, Nawab designate of Oudh, the Bhil leader, Dasaratha and Hiri (Maharashtra) Chinnamma of Kitur (Karnataka) Sayyed Ahmed (of Bareilley) the Wahabi leader and his colleague Teetu Meer and the patriotic Valu Thampi of Travancore, the anti-British Veer Raja of Coorg. the anti-landlord anti-Indigo planter Deedu Mien of Faridpur (now in

Bangla Desh). Narain Reddy of Karnool who embraced the gallows, Matu Bommen Naik of Ramnad, Tribhuvan Santhal, Mansinha Maji leaders of the Santhal rebellion, the well known leaders of 1857, Vishwanath Sardar, leader and initiator of the indigo revolt, Vesudeva Balwant Phadhke of Poona and Birsa of Ranchi. Hindus and Muslims fought shoulder to shoulder. Heroic women led the struggle on a number of occasions. The people fought in one part of the country or another emphasising that the entire country was passing through the same mill of foreign oppression.

On every occasion they were defeated overwhelmingly by a more well-equipped force. British superiority was not the superiority of courage and individual bravery, but of modern armies and an advanced social order, pitted against a decaying order and outdated armies. But by their courageous resistance of the people these struggles were laying the foundation of future national resistance.

Falsifiers of history did their best at one time to hide this militant national tradition of the Indian struggle.

The culmination of this era of struggles was the great national outbreak of 1857 which had a more cohesive consciousness, organisation and purpose behind it. It was in the fitness of things that it was Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, the revolutionary freedom fighter, who claimed for the people the heritage of this fight calling it "war of Independence of 1857". The delicate constitutional politics of the post 1857 leaders abhored this kind of disloyality and unconstitutional aberration.

It was almost the first attempt to organise resistance on a nation-wide plane, the first direct product of the new civilisation implanted by the British. Its appeal based on religion and failure to formulate its aims in modern national and democratic terms marked its limitations. But the obective character of a struggle can never be measured solely in terms of its own consciousness.

Objectively it was a national revolt and men like Disraeli, Ex-Prime Minister of Britain and leader of opposition in 1857 asked in Parliament "Does the disturbance of India indicate a military mutiny or is it a national revolt ? Is the conduct of the troops the consequence of a sudden impulse or is it the result of an organised conspiracy ?"

The British rulers and their scribes branded the rebellion as a mutiny and denied its national significance. Taking an unhistorical view some Indian writers also described the revolt as a feudal reaction, forgetting that the sepoys represented the peasantry in uniform.

It is however interesting to note that Karl Marx saw the real significance of the struggle and denounced its detracters. He wrote that :

> On first view, it was evident that the allegiance of the Indian people rested on the fidelity of the Indian army, in creating which the British rule simultaneously organised the first general centre of resistance which the Indian people were ever possessed of. Before this

there had been mutinies in the Indian army, but the present revo was distinguished by characteristic and fatal feature. It is the fir time that sepoy regiments have murdered their European officers, th the Musalmans and Hindus, renouncing their mutual anti-pathie have combined against their common masters, that "disturbanc beginning with the Hindus have actually ended in placing on th throne of Delhi a Mohamedan Emperor", that the mutiny ha not been confined to a few localities; and lastly, that the revolt in th Anglo-Indian army has coincided with the general dissatisfactio exhibited against English supremacy on the part of the great Asiati nations, the revolt of the Bengal Army being in no doubt, intimatel connected with the Persian and Chinese wars".

The unity exhibited in 1857, cutting across religious distinction, wa emphatically noted. This fact is very important, as it shows that the Sikhs like the Mohamedans, were making common cause with the Brahmins, an that a general union against the British rule, of all the different tribes, wa rapidly progressing.

More About 1857 War

The total army of the company consisted of 170,000 soldiers of whicl Indian numbered 140,000. They were divided into different contingents o armies stationed in Bombay, Madras, and Bengal. The Bengal army wa most homogeneous drawing its recruits mainly from of Oudh, Bihar an UP. the Brahmins, Rajputs Jats, and Muslims. The upper caste Hind sections came either from the upper strata or patta holders in villages.

For a long time these soldiers had not participated in a regular war being mainly concerned with protecting internal security. They were therefore spread all over Northern India. By Indian standards they were getting a proper wage, yet discontent was rife among them. It arose from the direct national humiliation they had to suffer in the army. No Indian soldier could expect to rise above the post of a Havaldar while new recruits from England would be placed in a higher position than any Indian soldier. The British soldiers and officers had separate messes and were provided with all amenities while the sepoys had to live in ramshackle huts along with their families.

The immediate cause of the revolutionary outburst is well-known. On May 10, 1857 the sepoys refused to accept the cartriges and were cruelly punished. Discontent spread and the sepoys got the support of the city poor and the peasants in nearby villages. The rebels killed their British officers and marched to Delhi. Vanquishing the British Officers, the rebellious soldiers marched towards the Red Fort, where Bahadur Shah the deposed Mughal Emperor was kept in detention. They prevailed upon the old emperor to declare himself as the ruler of India and took his signature on an appeal prepared by the revolutionary rebels. The Mullahs issued a fatwa declaring a religious crusade against the British. A new

Government was proclaimed in Delhi which included high placed courtiers and amirs. Bahadur Shah became the symbol of India's regained political power for the rebellious people.

The sepoys now faced difficulties of administration. A number of contingents from various parts of the country moved to Delhi. These sepoys were not yet united under a single command. They followed the directives of their contingents' leaders. The authority of the Delhi Government was not yet recognised. This led to lot of indiscipline. Besides there was growing shortage of food in the city as the landlords had stopped sending rent dues to the capital.

The sepoys established their organ of authority and administration (Jalsa) which consisted of six representatives of the sepoys and four of citizens. But despite its democratic character the Jalsa was not able to bring the situation under control and restore discipline.

In Bengal, the Governor General Canning succeeded in disarming the Indian sepoys and nipped the discontent in the bud : Some small mutinies did take place, but they were suppressed. In Punjab also the British Command was able to prevent a general revolt and only a few contingents could reach Delhi to join the rebels.

In contrast was the situation in Oudh and Bundelkhand. The kisan took no time in siding with the rebels. They made their own armaments for the struggle. They uprooted the landlords imposed by the British, attacked official quarters and stopped payment of rent to the old established andlords and talukdars. Having driven out the officials of the colonial Government, the peasants formed armed squads for defence and prepared to resume rights to village common land which the British had withdrawn.

The towns in the Doab took active part in the upsurge, Aligarh 21st May), Bareilley and Lucknow (31st May), Cawnpore (4th June) Allahabad (6th June) and many other towns were freed and new adminisration was established.

In Barelli the administration was headed by Khan Bahadur Khan a decendent of Hajis Rahamat Khan Rohilla who was killed in 1772 in a battle between the armies of Oudh and the Company. The reins of administration of Cawnpore were placed in the hands of Nana Sahebha the adopted son of Peshawa Bajirao II who had been deprived of his powers by Dalhousie. In Allahabad a school teacher and follower of the Wahabi doctrine, Maulvi Liaquat Khan assumed responsibility for the new administration.

But the sepoys in Delhi were without proper political and military leadership. Even when they could have taken the offensive against the British forces round the city, they kept to a defensive posture and permitted the enemy to gather together its far flung forces. The British utilised the time to recall its army from Iran, and from Madras for a common assault. There were 69 thousand sepoys behind the city walls of Delhi but they were unable to push back and rout 6,000 British soldiers. Lack of resources

and supplies drove many sepoys to leave Delhi – a sign of disintegration o common will. The defeat of Bakhu Khan in Nazafgarh proved a bad blo for the fighters.

All the manifestos issued on behalf of the rebels outlined several item of reform and concession promised after victory. These included specia concessions to traders and Muslim religious leaders but did not include any assurance to reduce the rent of the peasant-tenants. This disappointed a large section of sepoys who were mostly drawn from the peasantry. In this situation the British who had by now assembled their forces in sufficient numbers attacked the city and were able to capture Delhi in five days.

Thus crumbled the new seat of power – of Indian power established by the revolt. The fall of Delhi which lowered the morale of the revolutionary forces all over the country had become the symbol of their power and victory.

Delhi had to pass through a terrible ordeal of mass murder and loot. Bahadur Shah's two sons were shot dead by a British officer. The repine of Nadirshah paled into insignificance before the loot and vandalism of the advanced bourgeois represented by the British. According to Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, the crimes of the British army after the capture of Delhi were indescribable.

But Delhi was not alone. General Neil who was sent from Calcutta to lead the British army in Delhi went on rampage, murdering hundreds of people in Benaras and Allahabad. Even Lord Canning, the Governor General could not stomach this orgy of blood and murder, Neil was relieved of his command and replaced by General Haverlock. But Haverlock proved worse than Neil. Haverlock set on fire the villages through which he passed and several hundred were hung from trees.

In Cawnpore the rebels were led by Nana Sahab, Tantiya Tope and Ajeemullah Khan. Nana Saheb's Secretary Ajeemullah was an educated person who had visited Europe twice. The British had to surrender to the rebels after a tussle of three weeks. Now Haverlock came to the rescue of the British in Cawnpore. It was only in June that Haverlock was able to enter Cawnpore where upon he unleashed unprecedented terror and mass murders. In Lucknow after the success of the rebellion, the administration had been handed over to the decendents of the Nawab of Oudh. The city was administered by the decendents of the Nawab's officials. The real leader, however, was Ahmedullah belonging to an aristrocratic family from Madras. He had been to England but on his return was engaged in Wahabi propaganda. On 21st September Haverlock reached Lucknow but was surrounded by the rebels. The Commander in Chief of the British Army, General Campbell reached Lucknow from Cawnpore with artillery and 4,500 soldiers. He failed to take Lucknow but was able to rescue the British imprisoned in the Residency building. But in the meanwhile Tantiya Tope with the aid of sepoys of Gwaliors (the ruling Scindia family had sided with the British) made a swift movement against Cawnpore

defeated General Windhans and recaptured Cawnpore. Tantiya was later on defeated and the British again got hold of Cawnpore.

The sprit of resistance thus continued despite the fall of Delhi. Great and full of heroism was the fight put in defence of Lucknow. Campbell now mobilised an army of 49 thousand for an attack on Lucknow. There were two lakh people in the city and they all united to defend the city and resist the British onslaught. But they were short of arms and skilled military leadership. After a month's heroic resistance Lucknow fell to the foreigners and for two weeks witnessed loot, rapine and murder

The fall of Lucknow broke up a powerful centre of rebel activity and the rebellious forces now had to take to guerilla warefare, engaging the British in a series of skirmishes. In the meanwhile Canning declared that the properties of the Oudh Taluqdars would be confiscated by the Government as they had remained neutral in the struggle or had opposed the British. This angered the landlord interests and they got ready to defend their properties, joining the resistance forces operating under Bahadur Khan of Bareilley. Campbell met with such stiff resistance that he could reach Bareilley only by May 1858. After this Nana Saheb and his associates fled towards Nepal.

Tantiya Tope was still in action fighting the enemy. The Rani of Jhansi, who personally supervised the defence of Jhansi fort and managed to escape the surrounding British Army, joined Tantiya Tope They were successful in capturing Gwalior. But in later battle Tantiya was defeated and the Rani, who was leading the cavalry force, was killed.

The irrepressible Tantiya continued to fight. Dodging the enemy he went to Khandesh and in a swift movement again returned to Gwalior. But it seems he was betrayed and paid the price for loving his country.

This great revolutionary upsurge of the people was defeated for many reasons. It was a national upsurge but did not yet evoke all the forces of national resistance. Its driving forces were the peasants and artisans, no doubt. But its leadership rested with the traditional leaders of feudal society—the feudal landlords and aristocrats. It therefore could not produce a democratic programme to unify the people and above all to satisfy and unite the peasantry. The demands of the peasantry went against the interests of the feudals, who could not unite even the active forces of resistance located in the different centres. This failure narrowed the mass basis of the upsurge. The revolt besides lacked military leadership. The feudal leaders produced some heroic figures, but were unable to organise united resistance.

After the proclamation of Queen Victoria which guaranteed amnesty to all feudals, the upper strata of feudals detached themselves from the resistance. The Taluqdars and Rajas who had taken to arms after Cannings March Declaration confiscating their property now made peace with the Raj.

Finally it must be kept in mind that the entire Indian army did not join the battle.

The 1857 revolt was the first great awakening of the Indian peopl It was hazy in its conception and poor in its execution. But it relied (the most widespread and basic sections of Indian society—the peasantr It was a mixture of old and new—new aspirations and old leadership, struggle fought under the deadweight of tradition. It failed because tl forces which could successfully hold together various sections of the peop and provide viable modern leadership had not yet arisen. One of the la uprisings was that led by Vasudeva Balwant Phadke of Poona in 187 With Phadke a new personality arises on the scene to lead the mass u rising—a person educated under the British school system. Educated i Poona High School, employed as a clerk in the railway, this patriot whoı the officials referred to only as a brahmin placed himself at the hea of the dispossesed Ramosi and tried to give expression to the woes of th peasantry.

Rise of New Leadership

Though the armed struggle continued till the end of the 19th centur other important developments were taking place on the Indian scene in th post-1857 period.

For one thing the British rulers were entering upon a new phase ı their policy of exploitation consistent with the requirements of the nev phase of British capitalism.

In 1853 Marx noted this phenomenon :

> At the same rate at which cotton manufactures became of vita interest for the whole social frame of Great Britain, East India be came of vital importance to the British cotton manufacturers--Til then the interests of the moneycracy who had converted India int its landed estate, of the oligarchy who had conquered it by their armies and of the millocracy who had inundated it with their fabrics had gone hand in hand. But the more the industrial interest became dependent on the Indian market, the more it felt necessary to create fresh productive powers in India, having ruined her native industry. You cannot continue to inundate a country with your manufactu- res unless you enable it to give some product in return.

Lord Dalhousie's famous minute on railways put the British indus- trial point of view clearly :

> The commercial and social advantages which Indians would derive from the establishment of railways are, I truely believe, beyond all calculation—England is calling aloud for the cotton which India does already produce in some degree and would be sufficient in qua- lity and plentiful in quantity, if only there were provided the fitting means of conveyance from some distant plains to the several ports adopted for its shipment. Every increase of facilities in trade has been attended, as we have seen, with increased demands for articles of European produce in the most distant markets for India—New

markets are opening to us on this side of the globe under circumstances which defy the foresight of the widest to estimate their probable value or calculation of their future extent.

This policy of building the infrastructure to reach a wider Indian market for selling British goods and purchasing Indian raw material and agricultural produce was to be accelerated in the third quarter of 19th century when British capitalism entered the stage of imperialism. In this new stage export of capital to India was also necessary and development of infrastructure to facilitate British investment was required in a larger measure than before.

These developments were leading to important results. They were creating the background and wherewithal for a modicum of development of Indian industry, of indigenous capitalism. They provided a realistic basis for the values and ideology of the educated intelligentsia— domocratic values borrowed from the experience of advanced capitalist countries like Great Britain. With the future maturing of these developments this intelligentsia was to produce the leadership of the National Congress and the next phase of the freedom struggle.

The post 1857 period saw other changes in the policy of the British rulers. Learning from the experience of 1857, that with the army in revolt there was no social support for their regime, the British rulers decided to rely on the Indian princes and big landlord interests to act as a buffer against any repetition of 1857. The princes on the whole had remained loyal to them in the 1857 revolt ; the defection of some of the princes at a crucial stage in the struggle would have turned the tables against the British. The policy of annexation of princely states was thus given up. Simultaneously, frightened by the efforts of religious propaganda during the 1857 rebellion the British Government announced a policy of non-interference in the faith and belief of the people. It was meant to assure to all reactionary obscurantist forces of the protection of the state against progressive changes. Later on the policy was to be used to support caste and communal dissensions to disrupt the anti-imperialist struggle.

The National Congress was born in this background. Its origin was conceived by Hume, an official of the Raj with a specific aim in view—a mediation between the Government and the "ignorant mases" to check the unlawful proclivity of the latter. The assumption was that the ideas of constitutionalism and order, progressively instilled into the minds of the educated intelligentsia by western education, would enable them to hold the masses from disloyal action.

The British rulers and Hume were trying to use and organise the very forces which were destined to lead the struggle for the country's freedom. However, it was not the case that an organisation like the Congress composed of the educated intelligentsia would not have been born but for Mr. Hume. Historical developments were impelling the new leaders to join in an all India organisation. Local organisations had already arisen.

The effect of this is seen in India after three decades of indepen-lence. In the village it is not the agricultural worker or the small peasant vho dominates and controls production but rich landlord interests along vith a small section of capitalists. In ex-colonial countries where the iational liberation str ggle continued to be linked with the agrarian revo-ution the people could bypass the tortuous, capitalist path and rapidly iove to a new egalitarian social order.

This leads us to another aspect of national leadership. Hindu and Auslim alike, to a greater or lesser extent, made a revivalist appeal to ouse the people and in the bargain either kept silent or only mildly ttempted to reform the manifest injustices and tyranny imposed on cer-ain sections by caste and other considerations. Because of this orthodoxy ıey were unable to lessen the social barrier between the Hindus and Auslims which was exploited by the imperialists also.

This revivalist appeal to arouse national pride has been criticised y many sometimes justly and sometimes unjustly. In its extreme form it emanded total rejection of western civilisation. To a certain extent however ıe appeal to the past was part of the process of national awakening. . served to rouse the self respect of a vanquished and enslaved people. A ountry which had no common tradition of political struggles except of 19th entury which the new leaders disowned, had to turn to the common heritage f mythology and an older civilisation to propound the unity of the people nd refurbish its image. The recalling of the past to fight the present, to onceive the present in terms of the past, is a historical process seen in the istory of many other peoples. Karl Marx noted this and said :

> The traditions of all the dead generations, weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living. And just when they seem to be revolutionising themselves and things ; in creating something that has never existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in the time-honoured disguise and its borrowed language. (*Eighteenth Brumarire*).

However in India it was not simply a question of using the past to ek inspiration for the present. The revivalist appeal represented a com-'omise with the anti-democratic institution of caste, a compromise with ligious orthodoxy. Because the rising intelligentsia and bourgeois interests ere from the beginning interested in compromising with landlord interests ey failed to confront their feudal privileges against the peasantry and the itire village set up which sustained blind religiosity and the caste system. ıe continuity of religiosity, communalism and casteism was embedded in e compromise that permitted the continuation of antiquated land lations. The reducing the distinctions to a question of social reform among e Hindus was the result of this outlook. The situation was aggravated by e fact that most of the earlier leaders, the educated intelligentsia, came

'rom the Hindu upper castes. Their direct followers were drawn from the ırban middle classes who were perhaps more deeply embeded in these raditions. It was no accident that in the early years, in the days of Tilak, noderate leaders who were advocates of social reform were opposed and liscarded by the radical ranks who supported Tilak.

Tilak's orthodoxy and hostility to social reform are well known and arned him the justified criticism of social reformers and later on from the eaders of the non-Brahmin movement.

That is why the earlier anti-caste movements, general protests of the ppressed castes, grew outside the Congress. However, these too did not onnect the fight against caste oppression with the struggle to change igrarian relations and even divorced themselves from the anti-imperialist truggle. These movements limited to a perspective of caste oppressing aste, also reduced the problem to a question of social reform.

It should be noted that the Communist Party was the only political arty which linked the caste question with the agrarian revolution. The Draft Platform of 1930 said :

> As a result of the rule of British imperialism in India there are still in existence millions of slaves and tens of millions of socially outcast, working pariahs who are deprived of all rights. British rule, the system of landlordism, the reactionary caste system, religious deception and all the slave and serf traditions of the past throttle Indian people and stand in the way of emancipation—only the agrarian revolution and violent overthrow of British rule, will lead to the social, economic, cultural and legal emancipation of the working pariahs and slaves. The CP of India calls upon all the pariahs to join in the united revolutionary front with all the workers of the country against British rule and landlordism.
>
> The C.P. of India calls upon all the pariahs not to give in to the tricks of British and reactionary agents who try to split and set one against the other the toilers of the country.

The ideology of compromise with the caste system, was represented by Gandhi also. This would appear strange because the Mahatama campaigned like a crusader against untouchability in the non-cooperation movement of 1920. This was a step for ahead of those taken in earlier years and put into the shade the work of earlier Congress social reformers. It was necessitated by the need of uniting a mass nationalist upsurge against the British. But his passionate protest was reduced to a call for social reform among Hindus and delinked from the struggle against agrarian relations. Besides it was accompanied by an open justification of the varnashram system. The following statement makes the Mahatma's outlook on the question of varnashram abundantly clear :

> "If we do not efface un-touchability we shall be effaced from the earth . . . The four varnas are fundamental, natural, essential. While the innumerable castes are excrescence. Varnas fulfil nature's law of

> conservation of energy and economics. It is the classification of different systems of self-culture. It is the best possible adjustment of social stability and progress. It tries to include formation of a particular way of life, only it does not leave the decision whether a particular family belongs to a particular type, to the idiosyncracy of new intellectuals. It trusts to the principle of heredity and being only a system of culture does not hold that an injustice is done if an individual or family has to remain in spite of their decision to change their mode of life for the better. It is difficult to imagine a more harmonious adjustment. Caste does not connote superiority or inferiority. It simply recognises different outlooks and corresponding modes of life. (Quoted by J. Ram in *Caste Challenge in India*).

This was a blatant defence of caste obscurantism. But people saw no contradication between Gandhi's appeal for national unity and this justification of the iniquitous caste system. What dominated their minds was his call for national unity and protest against untouchability. Notwithstanding the secular views of Jawaharlal Nehru the Gandhian outlook represented the outlook of a majority of top Congress leaders.

The second Congress held in Calcutta in 1886 explained the secular and political basis of the Congress and the notion of Indian unity as conceived by it. Its report says :

> It is a community to temporal interests and not of spiritual connections that qualify men to represent each other in the vast majority of political questions. We hold that their general interests in this country being identical, Hindus, Christians, Mohammedans and Parsis may be as fitly as members of their respective communities, represent each other in the discussion of public secular affairs.

This reflected the outlook of national unity which despite its inherent limitation was represented by the Congress and which it was to maintain and strengthen over the years. This consciousness of national unity and opposition to British rule was to demarcate it from all other organisations based on caste or religion like the Muslim League, which were pitched against it by the British.

The foundation of the National Congress was no doubt an outstanding event of the period. It was inevitable that the British rulers, disappointed that the organisation was not playing the game they intended it to play, chose to belittle it. They soon criticised it as an organisation of a tiny minority of educated people, having no connection with the millions. It was true that at that time the Congress was not in direct touch with India's millions. Nonetheless in fighting for more rights for the people against the rigours of foreign rule, it represented the interests of the people.

The scribes of the foreign rulers began to describe the Congress as an organisation led by Brahmins and upper castes and to draw a distinction between it and the discriminated castes of Hindu society who were awakening

to their plight under Hindu caste domination. Attempts were made to put the non-Brahmin movement against the Congress and taking cue from Jinnah and others, the Congress was sought to be presented as a Hindu organisation.

They forgot the class, the new progressive interests embodied in the Congress and fondly hoped that by such gimmicks the progress of national movement could be stemmed. They failed to reckon with the mass discontent against their rule, the ardent desire of people for freedom which overcame many obstacles created by the limitations of the Congress leadership. Their only and big success was with the Muslim mass and they succeeded in partitioning the country.

Viceroy Dufferin passed the following judgment on the Congress:

> The Congress represented the tiny minority of educated section influenced by European education. They neither represent India's landed interests nor are they in touch with the multimillion multitude of India. Besides they are incapable of understanding the problem of the stability and security of the empire.

Little did Dufferin realize that this tiny section, then advocating a Presidential connection between India and Britain, was to become the representative of a class with whom the British rule would have to reckon in future; that with every passing year the gap between this tiny section and the masses would be reduced.

For the first twenty years after formation, the Congress was not the major vehicle for expressing the rising mass discontent. Events were taking place outside the Congress. Faced with this rising discontent the British Government became more and more hostile to the Congress and in 1900 Curzon declared that his greatest desire was to preside over the peaceful death of the party. For just at that time radical leaders taking their cue from the mass discontent outside were attempting to direct the Congress towards a more radical programme. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Pal and Lala Lajpatrai were about to make their radical mark on Congress politics.

Role Of The Press

Two imprortant forces working outside the Congress were the radical revolutionary youths coming from the middle class and the Indian press. The role played by the press in the freedom struggle was of inestimable value. In later years the nationalist press reflected Congress policies and went as far as the Congress wanted it to go. No doubt, its role was important but in the earlier period its significance was greater for, it played a great part in rousing the people and radicalising the Congress. Only a few passages will reveal the temper of the press and the character of their rebellious appeal.

The following appeared in *Kal* (of Poona written by Shivram Mahadeo Pranjapi):

When the ancestors of those who boast of their enterprise and

civilisation were in a disgusting state of barbarism or rath
before them. We were in full possession of all that ennobl
of head and heart. This holy and hoary land of ours
regain her position and be once more by her intrinstic
home, wealth of arts, and peace. A holy inspiration of spr
people must sacrifice their lives in the cause of what ha
determined to be their duty.* Heroes are springing up i
though brutal imprisonment reduces them to skeletons. L
ourselves to the service of the mother. A man maddened
will do everything and anything to achieve his ideal. His s
be adamentine. Just as widow immolates herself on the
of husband, let us die for the mother.

The *Yugangtar* (Bengal) left nothing to be inferred.

If the whole nation is inspired to throw off the yoke a
independent, then in the eye of God and the eye of ju
claim is more reasonable, the Indian's or the Englishman's
has come to see that independence is the penacea for all t
will therefore swim in a sea of blood to reach his goal.
domination of India is a gross myth. It is because the Indi
myth in his bosom that his sufferings are so great today.
the Indian Rishis preached the destruction of falsehoo
triumph of truth. And this foreign rule based on injusti
falsehood. It must be subverted and true Swedeshi rule es
Such language and advocacy had no place inside the Cong
Or take the *Dacca Gazette* welcoming the festival of Durg
Indian brothers, there is no more time for lying asle
the mother is coming. The Mother, the giver of all goods.
eyes upon your degraded children. Mother, they are n
with disease and sorrow. Oh Shyama, the reliever of thr
human afflictions, relieve our sorrows. Come Mother, th
of the demons and appear at the gates of Bengal.

Sir Herbert Risley, introducing the Press Bill in 1910 in t
Council, expressed fear of the Indian press in the following wor

We see the most influential and widely read section of
press incessantly occupied in rendering the Governme
established odious to the sight of the Indian people. T
ment is foreign, and therefore selfish and tyrannical. It
country of its wealth, it has impoverished the people a
about famine on a scale and with a frequency unknown
public works, roads, railways and canals have generated
has introduced plague by poisoning wells, in order to
population that has to be held in subjugation. It has d
Indian peasant of land, the Indian artisan of his indust
Indian merchant of his trade; it has destroyed religion by
system of education, it has destroyed caste by polluting

and for no purpose, the salt and sugar that men eat and cloth that they wear, it allows Indians to be ill-treated in British colonies, it levies heavy taxes and spends on the army. It pays high salaries to Englishmen and employs Indians as in the worst paid levels. In short it has enslaved a whole people who are now struggling to be free.

The Press was a great instrument of awakening the urban lower niddle class and carrying the seeds of discontent to the rural areas.

Radical Congress leaders like Bipin Chandra Pal, Bal Gangadhara Tilak and others expressed this discontent inside and outside the Congress. Bipin Pal was perhaps the first leader to advocate passive resistance against British rule. He called for Swadeshi to encourage Indian industries and boycott of British goods to kill British commerce. These were to be the economic weapons to fight British economic domination. To attain Swaraj, they were to be accompanied by the political weapon of passive resistance, "We can make the Government impossible by making it impossible for them to find people to serve them.... . This does not put an end to the administration but it creates endless complication in the work of administration and if these complications are created in every part of the country, the administration will have been brought to a deadlock and made nonetheless impossible, for the primary thing is the prestige of the Government and the boycott strikes at the root of the prestige."

The radical and the moderate wings clashed in the Congress Sessions at Banaras and Calcutta respectively in 1905 and 1906. This was the period of the anti-partition agitation in Bengal when anti-British discontent was reaching a new crescendo. The radicals were more responsive to the mass mood and consequently in 1905 the Congress had to adopt a resolution supporting the boycott. In the 1906 Session, Bipin Chandra Pal proposed the name of Tilak for the post of president. In this period, Tilak was the influential national leader amongst the radicals. He had faced repeated prosecutions and in 1908 was sentenced to six years imprisonment by an Indian Judge of the Bombay High Court. The British Government and its spokesmen concentrated their attack on Tilak, holding him responsible for creating Indian unrest. The moderates prevented his election only by pressing the name of Dadabhai Naoroji, the grand old man who first uttered the word Swaraj from the Congress platform and was revered by all.

Partition of Bengal

The British imperialists had their first skirmish with the national movement on the question of partition of Bengal.

Already the country had heard from the Congress platform the demand for Swadeshi, boycott of British goods, especially British clothes. It was a protest against colonial exploitation through dumping of British

quietly to work" to make the reforms a success. C.R. Das led the opposition to this resolution. It was amazing that barely 8 months after Jalianwala Bagh the resolution was passed. But the revolutionary tide continued to rise. The first six months of 1920 saw no less than 200 strikes involving one and a half million workers.

Lala Lajpat Rai, presiding over the special session of the Congress in September, 1920 took note of the situation when he said in his presidential address :

> "it is no use blinking the fact that we are passing through a revolutionary period. We are by instinct and tradition averse to revolutions. Traditionally we are slow going people; but when we decide to move, we do move quickly and by rapid strides. No living organism can altogether escape revolutions in the course of its existence".

R.P. Dutt correctly comments on this :

> "The declaration of spokesman of the Congress was in fact a declaration that in the midst of a revolutionary period, the leadership by instinct and traditions averse to revolution was faced with the problems of leading the movement. Herein lay the contradiction of the post-war situation in India as indeed in many countries wherein the political movement had not yet reached a maturity corresponding to the opportunities unloosed by the war.

In 1920 the people had marched forward and there was no question of withdrawal from the struggle. Gandhi and other leaders prepared to face the situation as perceived in Lala Lajpat Rai's presidential address.

The Calcutta Congress Session in 1920 voted for a programme of non-violent non-cooperation and the Congress decided to throw in its lot with the fighting people. The resolution could be adopted because of Gandhi's alliance with Pandit Motilal Nehru and others and the powerful support the resolution got from the Ali Brothers, heading the Khilafat movement .

The programme included a triple boycott of the legislatures, law courts and educational institutions that was to culminate, at some unspecified future date, in the final stage of non-payment of taxes. It will be seen that the immediate measures of the boycott were addressed to the middle class elements. The active call was to defy the Government and refuse tax payment or to defer it for the future. This was reflective of that fatal curse which hampered the growth of the national movement—the bourgeois fear of the agrarian masses. Of course, no note was taken of the ongoing struggle of the working class, no call was given to the railway workers to paralyse the Government.

Whatever the defects of the programme the entire Indian people responded to the call of the Mahatma. The British faced the total and uncompromising opposition of the people. Thousands of students left colleges, thousands went to jails. Gandhi broke the fear of jail. He broke the fear of the sedition act and by his forthright speeches brought such

freedom of speech for the people as could not have been imagined under the British rule. The uncompromising stand was put forward in one sentence—the satanic Government cannot be mended, it must be ended. This was repeated in tens of thousands of meetings. Preaching dissatisfaction against the Government became a duty of the people.

One cannot imagine the transformation brought about in this country by the non-cooperation movement. The mighty struggle led by the new class leadership made Gandhi a symbol of the people's fight, the leader, the inspirer. The Mahatma now commanded unbounded love and admiration from the common man. He rose head and shoulders above all his collegues because of his boldness in advocating non-violent non-cooperation. He did not flinch from offending the extreme Hindu orthodoxy by demanding removal of untouchability. By supporting the Khilafat movement espousing the protest against the treatment meted out to Turkey, Gandhi tried to mobilise the full power of national unrest and anger. The support to the Khilafat was of far greater importance than the Congress-League pact in 1916. The latter was a pact between the leaders; the former brought the Muslim mass into action. Never was Hindu-Muslim unity closer, never did it inspire greater confidence about the future than at this time. Hindu-Muslim unity was a fact seen in the streets, in demonstrations, in hartals and in struggles against the British police. The Muslim masses played a militant role in anti-police struggles sealing the unity with their blood.

However as is clear now it was a fragile pass for the revolutionary unity of the people separated by religion. Gandhi combined the appeal for Swaraj with all kinds of revivalist conceptions. The support to the Khilafat was based on an appeal to religion and support for the religious grievances of the community. It held out the prospect of permanent unity of the masses, but was lost because of class vacillations of the leadership.

The national unity propagated and achieved by the Congress leaders reflected on the one hand, the necessity of uniting all sections, irrespective of caste and creed, against the British and on the other hand the necessity of a compromise with feudalism, that is, a compromise with tendencies and ideologies which went contrary to the concept of national unity. It therefore, adopted an attitude of social reform—pleading against untouchability without going to the root of the problem. It advocated temple entry as it now advocates reservation, but dared not, at one stroke, abolish the feudal and semifeudal land relations which were the source of the slavery of the untouchables.

With regard to Hindu-Muslim unity, it adopted the same attitude. It preached unity on the basis of religious separation, it dared not challenge the source of division, thus failing to create a new basis for Indian unity. This outlook of compromise with the institution of religion found its expression in the Indian Constitution framed by the Congress leaders.

The British no doubt used the separatism created by religion to full advantage. They were aided by the conflict of certain class interests which

masqueraded as communal differences.

The Indian bourgeoisie arose mostly out of the Hindu trading and other sections. In the earlier years, in Bombay, certain big bourgeois groups arose out of the Muslim merchant class; but by 1930, the year of the international crisis of capitalism, they disappeared. Jinnah's earlier years perhaps represented this advance of the Muslim bourgeoisie.

While the Hindu landlords themselves were opposed to the Congress struggle, they soon felt reassured, though a strong section of conservative loyalists, 'Rajas and others' , continued to oppose it. But for the Muslim landlords, the advance of the bourgeois Congress was in the first place the advance of a rival community and above all the advance of the popular mass, the common man whom they feard most.

The growth of a thin strata of Muslim intelligentia could not alter this state of affairs. This intelligentsia contributed some outstanding leaders to the national movement who despite the maligning and virtual boycott by Muslims at one stage, remained in the Congress and continued to oppose imperialism. But majority of the Muslim intelligentsia entertained the same fears about the Congress and bourgeois advance as the landlords did. More and more they came to represent the fears of the landlords in the name of defending minority interests. The Muslim League was driven to take a position of hostility to the anti-imperialist struggle and played a key role in keeping the Muslim masses away from the common struggle. This was the biggest service rendered to imperialism. It ended in the slogan of the partition of India to create Pakistan, thus constituting of the Muslims a separate nation.

The Congress, as the leading organisation of the anti-imperialist struggle, could have given a death-blow to the communal outlook, had it championed the cause of agrarian revolution. Abdition of landlordism and the distribution of land to the tiller would have drawn into the common struggle millions of Hindus and Muslims. The Muslim mass would have been rescued from the pernicious influence of orthodoxy and the landlords. But the bourgeois leaders of the Congress, historically incapable of liquidating feudal relations in their struggle for power, compromised with landlordism, the caste system and religious separatism. Consequently they were unable to prevent the exploitation of religious separatism for purposes of conservative class interests.

The preceding discussion should show that the minority communalism of the pre-independence national liberation period was not the product of a religious conflict but the result of an exploitation of existing separatist feelings for the purpose of modern class interests. It is an irony of fate that the Muslim orthodoxy and the Muslim mass, who had been more anti-British than the Congress leaders and the Hindu masses in the early years of struggle should find themselves on the wrong side in the subsequent years.

The orthodox Muslims regarded the British as usurpers depriving

them of their right to rule. They also shared the Islamic tradition of fighting Christendom and earlier than Gandhi had denounced western civilisation, including its education, to be sinful and anti-Islamic. However, the progress of the community in modernisation, of opening itself to democratic ideals and thought was extremely slow.

Syed Ahmed Khan, despite opposition from a fanatical Islamic orthodoxy, succeeded in founding a Mohammedan College at Aligarh, which was to expose Muslim students to modern and western thought. But, as in most Indian colleges, education was not to be divorced from religion. Orthodoxy did extract its price. But Dr. Syed obviously thought that opposition to western modern thought could be cured by a liberal interpretation of the Koran.

The British were no doubt interested at this stage in the penetration of modern western concepts among the leaders of the Muslim community. They thought it would be a counter-weight to orthodox opposition to their rule and would enable them to influence the Muslim masses.

But developments took place in a contrary direction. By the end of the first decade of the century, the newly educated section imbibed the spirit of opposition to the British rulers and came nearer the National Congress. It was awakened by the first stirrings of national feeling against foreign rule. It was also influenced by the policies pursued by British imperialism and European nations towards Islamic countries. There was a revolutionary upheaval in Constantinople led by the young Turkish party. A section of the Indian Muslim educated intelligentia established contact with them. There they learnt about the perfidious British policy towards Muslim nations seeking independence. The British occupation of Egypt, the Anglo-French Agreement with regard to Morocco, the Anglo-American Agreement with regard to Persia, and the Italian invasion of Tripoli, were seen as a-conspiracy of the powers of Christendom against the power of Islam. The Balkan Wars of 1912-13 were seen as further confirmation of the conspiracy of Christian powers against Turkey, "the sword of Islam". Muslim leaders collected Red Crescent funds to help their co-religionists in struggle and a delegation went to Turkey and established close contact with the Turkish nationalists. These same people were now on the way to securing a majority in the Muslim League and bringing it into with the advanced wing of the Congress. Within a decade of the formation of the Muslim League, the process of coming nearer the national movement had started. By 1913, the Muslim League had adopted the slogan of "self government within the Empire for India" and co-operation with other communities for achieving this objective.

The 1916 Lucknow Pact of Congress-League unity accepted the system of separate electorates, but proclaimed the common aim of Dominion Status to be striven for by both the organisations. A joint session of the Congress and the League was held at Lucknow. Tilak declared at the Congress Session ; "It has been said, gentlemen, by some that we Hindus

have yielded too much to our Mohammedan brethren. I am sure. I represent the sense of Hindu community all over India, when I say that we would not have yielded too much when we have to fight against a third party; it is a very great thing, a very important event that we stand on this platform united, united in race, united in religion, united as regards all different shades of political creed". It is to be noted that Tilak speaks on behalf of "we Hindus".

Presiding over the League Session, Jinnah declared "I have been a staunch Congressman throughout my life and have been no lover of sectarian cries. But it appears to me that the approach of separatism sometimes levelled at the Musalmans is singularly inept and wide of the mark when I see this great communal organisation growing into a powerful factor for the birth of United India."

This was the background of the first non-cooperation movement which combined the Swaraj movement with the Khilafat movement. The Khilafat movement served to channelise the post-war discontent among the Muslim masses. It was not simply a protest against the violation of the rights of the people of Turkey. It demanded the restoration of the imperial power of the Khalif, to enable him to discharge his office as the spiritual head of Islam. The religious appeal was dominant.

By lending support to this demand, Gandhi and the National Congress brought about unprecedented unity among the masses of India, throwing the British into panic. The Khilafat leaders were the first to demand that Swaraj be defined as complete independence. It was at the Ahmedabad Session of the National Congress in 1921 that Hasrat Mohani made this demand. It was Gandhi who led the opposition to it. Similarly, as early as 1919, the Muslim League, at its Amritsar Session passed a resolution calling upon the Muslims in India not to join the Indian Army. In June 1922 a joint session of the Khilafat and Jamait-Ul-Ulema at Lucknow passed a resolution that "the best interests of India and the Muslims demand that in the Congress creed the term 'Swaraj' be substituted by the term 'Complete Independence'.

This was a period when traditions and barriers were being broken down. The Government of India's publication (India in 1919-1920) noted : "One noticeable feature of the general excitement was the unprecedented fraternisation between the Hindus and Muslims. The union between the leaders, had now for long been a fixed plank of the national platform. In this time of public excitement, even the lower classes agreed for once to forget the differences. Extraordinary scenes of fraternisation occurred. Hindus publicly accepted water from the hands of Muslims and vice-versa. Hindu-Muslim unity was the watchword of processions indicated both by the cries and banners. Hindu leaders had actually been allowed to preach from the pulpit of a mosque."

The first sweep of the anti-imperialist struggle was on the point of removing the age-old barriers and they would have been definitely

wiped out, had the struggle been allowed to reach revolutionary heights and develop into an agrarian revolution. This was the point at which the national bourgeois leadership led by Gandhi failed. It retreated when the basic force of the anti-imperialist movement—the peasantry—was coming to violent conflict with the forces of imperialist repression and showing signs of entering upon an anti-landlord struggle. Chawri Chaura in Uttar Pradesh in which several policemen were killed, was enough to induce Gandhi to withdraw the struggle. The intention of preventing the peasants' fight against the landlords is seen in the fact that the Congress resolution admonishes the peasantry for refusing to pay rent to the landlords.

Clause 6 of the Working Committee resolution which withdrew the struggle said: "The Working Committee advises Congress workers and organisations to influence the ryots that the withdrawing of rent payments to the zamindars is contrary to the Congress resolutions and injurious to the best interest of the country." Clause 7 said: "The Working Committee assures the zamindars that the Congress movement is in no way intended to attack their legal rights, and that even where the ryots have grievances, the Committee desires that redress be sought by mutual consultation and arbitration." Thus the national bourgeois leadership laid low the spectre of agrarian revolution, to secure their alliance with the landlords.

The first note of warning was heard at the Ahmedabad National Congress Session in 1921. The Communist Party of India in its manifesto to the Congress significantly declared:

> If the Congress would lead the revolution, which is shaking India to the very foundation, let it not put faith in mere demonstrations and temporary wild enthusiasm. Let it make the immediate demands of the trade unions its own demands; let it make the programme of the Kisan Sabha its own programme; and the time will soon come when the Congress will not stop before any obstacle; it will be backed by the irresistible strength of the entire population, consciously fighting for their material interests.

The disorganisation of the struggle, its betrayal, led not only to dependency among the masses but quickly led to a reassertion of the old separatism and animosity. Henceforth the Muslim mass was never to come under the Congress banner in large numbers and within a decade and a half it was to be completely alienated from the national struggle and had turned hostile to it. The British and the fanatical reactionary Muslim leaders completed the process of disruption by encouraging riots and supporting every kind of separatist claim and interest.

Till 1930, the Congress could still claim some following among Muslims but over the next decade it lost influence, despite the resolute ness of a heroic band of nationalist Muslim leaders who remained with the Congress and the support of the anti-imperialist Deoband Ulemas.

By 1930 the strength of the Indian bourgeoisie had increased. The weight of the intelligentsia, coming mostly from amongst the Hindus increased in administration, and in other professions. The majority community registered allround advance, while the minority was left far behind. The absurd and obscurantist ideas of the minority regarding women prevented spread of education among them and hampered the progress of the community. Besides, in the 1930s, the biggest Muslim industrial groups—the Currimbhoy Ibrahim group—went bankrupt. Muslim capital now remained mainly in trade and commerce.

The 1930 movement led by the Congress, was received by attacks and hostility from a large section of Muslim leaders. There was now no anti-British appeal based on Islamic consideration. The communal leadership took full advantage of this and the separatism generated after the withdrawal of the 1920 struggle. The enthusiastic participation of Muslims of the North-Western Frontier Province, under the leadership of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, created panic in reactionary Muslim circles who considered it as a movement for Hindu dominion. The Muslim mass was now taught to disassociate itself from this 'Hindu' movement. The leaders were panicky for two reasons—the awakening among the peasants and the fear of rising bourgeois influence which they identified as Hindu influence. Henceforth the dominant role of the Muslim League leadership and other communal organisations was to keep the militant Muslim mass away from the common anti-imperialist struggle. The appeal to Islam, which at one time had been a rallying point to fight the British, now became an appeal to fight the National movement and collaborate with the British. Behind this were the vested interests of the landlords of a religious community which had failed to develop a sizeable bourgeoisie representing the modern interests of the community.

The complete isolation of the Congress from the Muslim mass was seen in the 1937 elections. The Congress won an overwhelming majority of the general seats, but contested only 58 of the 482 Muslim seats, winning only 26 (15 in the North-West Frontier Province and only 11 in the rest of India). The Congress was routed though the Muslim League got only 4.6 per cent of the vote. This finally led to the demand for separate nationhood for Muslims and dismemberment of the country, at the cost of thousands of innocent Hindu and Muslim lives.

The bankruptcy of the national bourgeois leadership was as exposed as was the disruption organised by the minority leaders to beat down the anti-imperialist struggle.

The Congress leadership with all its weaknesses, continued to oppose the British till a compromise was hammered out. The minority leadership on the other hand, acted as a counter-weight against the national movement and was used by the British. This constitutes a qualitative difference between the two leaderships and organisations.

"The growth of trade, commerce, and education had begun much

earlier in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras that is, in the Hindu majority areas, than in the Muslim areas of the North. Hence, with the rise of the Indian bourgeoisie, conditions of sectional rivalry existed which could easily assume a communal guise. The great landlords who formed the main basis of the Muslim upper class, viewing with displeasure the advance as "Hindu". (R.P. Dutt, *India Today*, p. 458). The minority separatism of later years was a direct product of clash of class interests—the landlords (Muslim) pulling the Muslim masses against the advance of the bourgeoisie. This class fear was given the garb of a communal fight arising out of religious differences.

The national struggle at this stage faced the problem of uniting a people overcoming caste distinctions and caste separatism. A minimum sense of equality overcoming caste distinctions had to be achieved. Gandhi took on the crusade against untouchability, though he still believed in the varnaashram system. As an expression of Indian one-ness Gandhi preached acceptance of Hindi as the national language of the people.

"He will tell the most orthodox audience at Poona that if they want to be the leaders of the nation they must give up their wordly notions of caste ascendancy and their harsh enforcement of 'untouchability' or he will lecture a youthful Bengali audience, immensely jealous of their own language, on their shameful ignorance of Hindi, which he believes to be the future language of India and of Swaraj . . . His influence over Indian Mohammedans cannot be so deep-rooted—but it is of some significance that his warm espousal of their grievances had led some of his most enthusiastic Mohammedan supporters to bestow upon him the designation of Wali or viceregent which is sometimes used to connote religious leadership".

Indeed Gandhi's appeal for national unity to achieve Swaraj was overlaid with God and religion. In *Young India* he advocated non-cooperation stating that the movement is essentially religious :

> "The business of every God-fearing man is to dissociate himself from evil in total disregard of consequences. He must have faith in a good deed producing a good result, that, in my opinion, is the Gita doctrine of work without attachment. God does not permit man to peep into the future. He follows truth, although the following of it may endanger his life. He believes that it is better to die in the way of God than to live in the way of satan. Therefore whoever is satisfied that this Government represents the activity of the Satan has no choice left to him but to dissociate himself from it."

At the annual session of the Congress at Nagpur in December 1920, the creed of the Congress was changed from the aim of colonial self-government within the Empire, to be attained by Constitutional means, to the new aim of "the attainment of Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means".

The Congress ceased to be a loose organisation—units were extended

to villages and committees were formed at all levels.

The new programme meant a break with the old tradition and was a bid to acquire leadership of the struggle developing under the stress of postwar misery.

But the leadership saddled the mass struggle with the condition of absolute non-violence which, when strictly observed, reduced all mass actions to symbolic protests unable to change the basic reality of foreign domination, while at Nagpur Congress Gandhi declared that India did not "want to end the British colonialism at all costs unconditionally". He explained that the resolution of which he was the mover could be accepted equally by these "who believe that by retaining the British connection we can purify overselves and purify the British people, and those who have no such belief". Presiding over the Belgaum Session in 1924 Gandhi gave the formula "within the empire if possible, without if necessary". In 1928 he asked for Dominion Status and after the 1930 movement he continued to plead for Dominion Status at the Round Table Conference. The masses responded in their own way to the call for non-cooperation with the British. The peasants in particular, took this as a sign that the days of the Raj were numbered. They made their own contribution to non-cooperation. The Midnapore No Tax Campaign, the Moplah rebellion in the South, the peasant movement in Oudh and the Akali movement in Punjab against Government supported Mahants were expressions of this. Along with the official non-cooperation, the triple boycott addressed to the educated classes led to the rise of new forms of mass struggle in the country.

Meeting in the background of these developments the Ahmedabad Session of the Congress proclaimed "the firm determination of the Congress to continue the campaign of non-violent non-cooperation with greater vigour till Swaraj is established and the centre of the Government of India passes into the hands of the people." The session placed full power in the hands of Mahatma Gandhi as the sole executive authority of the Congress.

Mahatma Gandhi was unhappy with the mass struggle. He saw in it only increased violence and a straying away from the path of true satyagraha. He gave expression to his disappointment when he said that Swaraj stank in his nostrils. Restoring order meant checking the initiative of the masses and the local leadership. Several districts approached him for sanctioning a no-tax campaign. The Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh began the campaign without his permission but Gandhi called for its withdrawal and asked that all Government dues should be paid.

He now wanted to start a campaign with chosen people and on a miniature scale to avoid irresponsible violence. Bardoli Taluk in Gujarat was chosen for the purpose and the Viceroy was warned that unless the political prisoners were released and repressive measures abandoned, mass civil disobedience would begin in Bardoli.

But as fate would have it, news arrived that in the Chauri Chaura village of United Provinces the angry peasants had clashed with the police, stormed and burned the village police station and the police constabulary. This was too much for the worried Mahatma who used his sole authority to liquidate the movement in order to remain faithful to the principle of non-violence. A meeting of the Congress Working Committee held at Bardoli on 12th February 1922, took the decision that in view of the inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri Chaura not only mass civil disobedience but the whole campaign of civil disobedience through volunteer processions, the holding of public meetings under ban and the like must end to be substituted by a "constructive programme of spinning, temperance, reform and educational activities."

This unexpected and disastrous withdrawal angered the people and dismayed even the Congress leaders loyal to Gandhi. "The principle lieutenants of the Mahatma, Deshbandhu Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajpatrai who were all in prison shared the popular sentiment. I was with the Deshabandhu at the time and could see that he was beside himself with rage and sorrow" (Subhash Bose, *The Indian Struggle*). Nehru had to admit that it led to demoralisation and aggravated the communal situation. The decision he says in his autobiography "brought about a certain demoralisation. It is possible that the sudden bottling up of a great movement contributed to a tragic development in the country. The drift to sporadic futile violence in the political struggle was stopped, but the suppressed violence had to find a way out, and in the following years this perhaps aggravated the communal trouble". In short people's violence against the foreign rulers was now diverted to violence towards each other. This as we shall see is entirely correct and gave a shattering blow to Hindu-Muslim unity and to Indian unity from which it could never recover.

A few days before the withdrawal--on 9th February—the Viceroy communicated with London stating :

> The lower classes in the towns have been seriously affected by the non-cooperation movement . . . In certain areas the peasantry have been affected, particularly in parts of Assam Valley, United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa and Bengal. As regards the Punjab the Akali agitation has penetrated to the rural sikhs. A large portion of the Mohommadan population though out the country are embittered and sullen."

The fear of agrarian revolution was in operation. The withdrawal resolution condemned mass violence, suspended civil disobedience, and asked the cultivators to pay all government dues and not to undertake any offensive activities. The Working Committee further informed the ryots that withholding of rent payable to the zamindars (landlords) is contrary

*to the Congress resolution and injurious to the best interests of the coun*try. *It* assured the "zamindars *that the Congress movement is in no way* intended to attack their legal rights and that even where the ryots have grievances the Committee desires that the redress should be sought by mutual consultation and arbitration."

Just when the peasantry had started coming into violent conflict with the foreign rulers and their social support-the landlords, the struggle was withdrawn.

The disastrous consequences of this let down were to be experienced in the following years. There was every possibility of permanently uniting the Hindu and Muslim masses if the developing agrarian movement in which the toilers from both communities were directly interested had been developed along with the anti-British struggle. The Hindu and Muslim peasants fighting Hindu and Muslim landlords, overcoming the hold of the obscurantist feudal classes on the people, would have raised a new type of unity unassailable by communal appeals or obscurantism. This was precisely what had started happening in the course of the non-co-operation movement. But it was seen merely as sporadic violence and the process of unity was arbitrarily halted.

This situation was exploited by agents of the British, to create further breaches and make Hindu-Muslim unity impossible for the future. These obscurantists had been held in check so far because the national movement and the Congress had befriended the Khilafat agitation. But now with the withdrawal of the struggle, the fragile unity of the Hindu-Muslim masses could be easily disrupted by communal appeals. The disappointment of the Muslim masses was turned against the Hindus and the Congress.

The years after the Bardoli withdrawal were followed by widespread communal riots all over the country reducing Hindu-Muslim unity to a shambles. Gandhi fasted and undertook penance because of these riots. The communal press on both sides did its best to poison the atmosphere. Every incident, however small, was used to create communal tension. The only relieving feature was the protracted and united strikes of Hindu and Muslim workers.

The Congress leaders and the nationalist press no doubt kept cool and kept faithfully to the ideal of national unity, but open encouragement to communal elements by the Government and the partisan use of the police, drove deep breaches between the two communities.

The declaration of the Republic of Turkey and deposition of the Khalif ended the Khilafat agitation. Yesterday's Khilafat leaders turned into outright communalists.

But while the British were congratulating themselves on their success,

a new force was emerging. This was the force of the communists and the labour movement. Already in the 1922 Ahmedabad Congress the voice of the communists was raised for complete independence and revolutionary struggle. Since then the British Government had been launching one conspiracy case after another against the sprouting communist movements. But those inspired by the October Revolution continued to spread in the working class. Simultaneously the strike struggles of the working class in India began to rise with the break up of partial stabilisation of world capitalism and the approaching general crisis of the capitalist system. Long battles were fought all over India. Strikes lasted for several months, mass unions were formed and the working class faced lathi charges, police firing and life sentences. At the head of these struggles stood a leadership either of communists or radical nationalists. The result was a sharp rise in the political consciousness of the working class and a growing linkage of the trade union struggle with the anti-imperialist struggle. This was seen in the mighty protests and strikes of the working class in Bombay and elsewhere against the appointment of the Simon Commission which was boycotted by the Congress and other organisations.

The imperialists understood the writing on the wall and struck at the working class before the Congress could move into new all India action. They repressed the trade unions, jailed their leaders, launched the Meerut Conspiracy case in which 31 leaders were accused of organising a conspiracy to overthrow the British Raj by violent revolution.

The 18 communists in the Conspiracy case openly announced from the Court that they wanted to oust British imperialism to end the feudal and landlord imposed misery of the peasant and take free India forward to socialism. They were sentenced to prison terms ranging from 5 years to transportation for life.

During this period the communist movement gave many valuable deas to the national movement. Historically it was necessary that the national liberation movement be linked with the movement for removing all pre-capitalist economic relations and creating conditions for an entirely new social order. The communists understood that a firm national consciousness could be created on the basis of old land relations and that caste, religion and communalism which disrupted the democratic struggle ould be reduced to a subsidiary role only if the feudal and semi-feudal onditions which maintained them were completely abolished. They nderstood that abolition of caste was not a question of Hindu social eform but of uprooting the old socio-economic order in the villages They lso understood that division on the basis of religion could not be done way with by propaganda for unity alone but could be achieved only in the course of the common struggle of the Hindu and Muslim masses gainst imperialism and their indigenous exploiters. At the Congress

Session in Calcutta in 1928, the communists and radical nationalists together organised a huge demonstration of 50000 peasants and workers who presented the slogan of an independent socialist Republic of India. So deep was the ideological class influence of the bourgeois leadership that this course was misunderstood by many as a diversion from the national struggle. It should be recorded here that the Congress leadership as a whole was extremely unwilling to utilise the strike weapon of the working class for political purposes thereby depriving the national struggle of a very effective form of action. In theory of course they defended the political strike as during the discussion in the Central Legislative Assembly when the Government brought a Bill to ban such strikes.

The demoralisation and frustration arising out of the collapse of the first non-cooperation movement against the British led to rise in revolutionary activities amongst the youth. Temporarily impressed by the huge mass response to that non-cooperation movement, confident that an effective result could follow, young people had thrown themselves whole-heartedly into the Gandhian non-cooperation movement. But with a sudden and unexpected withdrawal they seemed to loose faith in mass actions itself and decided to fight the British by means of organising revolutionary groups and taking up arms against the officials. The heroism of these people is not properly recorded. A large number of conspiracy cases were launched against them, many were hanged but the fight continued and mostly it was disowned by the Congress leaders. As in the earlier years, heroic figures emerged—Ram Pradad Bismil and Asfaqualla of the Kakorri conspiracy case, who were hanged, Sachendra Sanyal and others were sentenced to 20 years, Chandra Sekhar Azad who was a young man in the non-cooperation movement and was flogged in a British jail, a larger number of revolutionaries from Bengal, those who participated in the great Chittagong Armoury raid, Ganesh Ghosh, Anand Singh, Kalpana Dutt, Subash Ram and many others and finally leading to the accused in the Lahore conspiracy case which ended in the martyrdom of Jatindas, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukh Dev. These young men continued to revive the spirit of the demoralised people after the collapse of the first movement.

The British Government, however, completely mis-calculated, because Gandhi formally retired from the Congress and there was temporary dislocation of his influence. They thought as earlier Lord Curzon had thought that the Congress was dead. They proped up all kinds of communal bodies against the Congress and thought that the Congress could be nationalised in future. The Congress Party in the meanwhile finding that the mass waves had to some extent, subsided decided to end the boycott of the legislatures and effect entry in the Central Assembly and the Provincial Councils. It utilised the legislative forum for consolidating its hold over the people. The Congress at the same time seized initiative

for uniting various political parties for a common stand on future reforms.

The Nehru Committee appointed by the Congress under the Presidentship of Pandit Motilal Nehru produced an all party document giving a blue print of an Indian constitution with dominion status for India. This was in reply to the British challenge to produce an agreement amongst the Indian parties themselves.

This demand for dominion status was itself an indication of the increased confidence of the Congress leadership and their confidence in the future of Indian industry. During the war and after, Indian industry had developed to a certain extent and demand for protection and markets had become urgent. The interests of the Indian industrialists increasingly converged with the aims of the Congress-led agitation for dominion status. The Congress leaders now gave concrete expression to their democratic ideas basing them on the need to develop capitalist private property in India. By 1923 the demand for protection of Indian industries was raised seriously and the Government had to appoint a Fiscal Commission to examine the question. The Indian members of the Commission who were in the majority called for protection and further extension of national industries. It was in this period that the Central Assembly agreed to grant protection to the Tata Steel Industry and perhaps that was one of the few occasions on which the Swarajists supported the Government.

These parliamentary manoeuvres suffered a setback when by 1926 the partial stabilisation of world capitalism was upset leading to a serious agrarian crisis in the colonial countries. The imperialists were trying to pass the burdens of the agrarian crisis on the colonial people including the peasantry and the industrialists. The Indian Govrnment sought to pass the burden of the slump on the Indian people by manipulating the Rupee-Sterling Exchange Ratio to facilitate British imports and depreciate the return for Indian exports. Both Indian industry and the peasantry were victims of this manipulation. The crisis in industry had already unleashed a tremendous strike wave in the country. It was also leading to agrarian unrest.

In this background the British Government announced a new Royal Commissson on Indian Reforms—the Simon Commission. It insulted Indian nationalism by refusing to appoint even a single Indian on the Commission. The Congress boycotted it and organised protest demonstrations when the members of the Commission landed in India. In Bombay and Calcutta there were strikes and black flag demonstrations against the Commission. All over India there were big protest movements. Utilising this pressure the Congress leaders tried to arrive at a compromise with the British on the basis of dominion status or something short of it. Dominion status even with the limited power it would grant, would be

extended with the support of the mass movement for protecting the interests of the rising class of Indian industrialists but it was neither complete independence and nor would it free the masses from economic slavery. At the 1928 Calcutta Session the battle between the radicals and Communists on the one hand and the Congress leadership on the other centred precisely on this question of independence or dominion status. The Communists moved an amendement calling for complete independence and an agrarian programme. Subash Chandra Bose, leading the radicals, called for complete independence. But the dominant leadership of the Congress under Gandhi's leadership decided to stick to dominion status as the common demand on the plea that they would accept the demand for complete independence if within a year the government did not accept dominion status.

The Government's refusal to budge resulted in the Lahore Congress resolution in favour of complete independence. Once again Gandhi was given full powers to decide the pace and character of the movment.

The second non-cooperation movement was totally distinct from first great upsurge of the people in 1920. The leadership of the Congress kept all mass initiative in check from the beginning.

The Independence programme was now reduced to 11 points covering various reforms—total prohibition, reduction of land revenue and military expenditure, a protective tariff on foreign cloth and reduction of land rent by 50 per cent. It is interesting to note that Mahatma Gandhi who in 1920 considered modern industry sinful, now demanded protection for the Indian textile industries which also competed with the handloom industry. By-now, Gandhism had shed its earlier anti-western trappings and was openly advocating the immediate demands of the national capitalist class. The 11 point programme for independence though it included some pertinent democratic demands, and the important demand for 50 per cent reduction in land rent, gave priority to the demand for raising the Rupee-Sterling ratio. Alongwith protection to Indian industries and prohibition of import of foreign cloth it demanded reservation of coastal traffic for Indian vessels. Under these 11 demands, even the central question of political power was hardly there, to say nothing of the question of freeing the Indian peasants from their economic miseries.

From the beginning Mahatma Gandhi took care to see that the struggle was carried on with the aid of his faithful followers so that it did not exceed the limits he wanted to set on it. Mahatma Gandhi and his Sabarmati associates were to lead the march to Dandi. Later on everybody was asked to formally break the Salt Law and Forest Law but nowhere perhaps was the call for refusal of land rent or tax given. It was a movement which from the beginning was extremely well controlled in the name of discipline and avoiding violence. In Bombay the Congress gave repeated calls for Hartal witnessing both the co-operation of the mill owners and

the enthusiastic participation of the workers. The mass movement which developed in April nonetheless went considerably beyond the limits set by Gandhi. Rising strikes, powerful demonstrations, the Chittagong armoury raid in Bengal, the incidents in Peshawar which was in the hands of the people for 10 days, and the beginning of spontaneous movements by the peasants in a number of localities especially in the United Provinces where the Congress sought to mediate on the basis of 50 per cent payment of rent were indicative of the people's mood. A characteristic of this movement was that the participation of the Muslim masses was far less than in 1920, and it was largely due to the influence of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, the Frontier Gandhi, who had made common cause with the Indian National Congress and became one of its prominent leaders. It was because of this that the Muslim mass in Peshawar threw itself in to the fight against the police and the military. The clashes resulted in hundreds of deaths but two platoons of Hindu troops refused to open fire on the Muslim crowd, broke ranks, and fraternised with the crowd, a number of them handed over their arms. Immediately after this, the military and the police were completely withdrawn from Peshawar and the city was in the hands of the people for a week. The men of the Garhwali Rifles who refused to open fire on the crowd were led by Chandrabali Singh, a peasant from Garhwal. They were all sentenced to long years of imprisonment. But they were disowned by Gandhi who said "a soldier who disobeys an order to fire breaks the oath which he has taken and renders himself guilty of criminal disobedience. I cannot ask officials and soldiers to disobey; for when I am in power I shall in all likelihood make use of those same officials and those same soldiers."

The arrest of Mahatma Gandhi led to a huge outburst in Sholapur where Martial Law had to be imposed. Four leaders of the agitation were hanged, one of them was the Secretary of Workers' Union. The Congress leadership lost control over the people who took charge of the administration and maintained order after driving out the British officials. This agitation in the end resulted in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of compromise and withdrawal of the movement. At the Karachi Congress, the Session passed the basic rights resolution which improved the Congress programme making an approach to the mass of tenants who were suffering feudal exploitation. However, it only talked about mediation between the two and nothing more. On the eve of the Karachi Congress which was held after the Pact, Bhagat Singh and bis colleagues were hanged. This created tremendous indignation amongst the people.

The withdrawal of the movement and the Congress offer of cooperation did not lead to any fruitful result. The British Government was determined to have no compromise and in 1932 the Congress was unceremoniously attacked, thousands were again put into jail and Gandhi and the working comittee leaders found themselves behind the bars. The

entire illusion of dominion status, the illusion that Britsh would make big concessions if mass movement was restricted, collapsed.

By 1932 the Congress entered into wilderness, had formally withdrawn the movement and decided to attend the Round Table Conference. The Government did not give any representation to the Congress but Gandhi was declared its pleni-potentiary. This was humiliating for the Congress and was put on a par with all kinds of other organisations which had hardly any following In the Round Table Conference Gandhi's voice was rai ed on behalf of dominion status and he was prepared to accept safeguards for the British. But once the mass movement was over, the British were in no hurry to make any concessions and remained firm on the Federal Constitution which was a mockery of a Constitution which retained all powers for the Provincial Ministry. The British Government had totally mis calculated that Congress was so isolated that communal and caste parties would balance its influence but nationalist opinion rallied round the Congress and in almost all cities it got a thumping majority. Because of the Congress outlook and the restricted powers of the Ministries they could not do much for the people. Nonetheless the people as a whole looked upon them with pride as an achievement satisfying national respect. That is why the Congress added to its prestige while running the Ministries and all the designs of the British to wean away mass influence from the Congress failed.

While these parliamentary experiments were going on a new radical current arose in the Congress itself. It soon crystalized in the Congress Socialist Party led by Jaya Prakash Narayan and others and in the initial stage did good work inside the Congress to radicalise its policy. It cooperated with the Communists to organise Kisan Sabhas and Trade Unions and carry forward the message of complete independence and socialism to the people. A large number of people were helped by JP's book *Why Socialism* to understand the principles of socialism and fight for them. Unfortunately this group could not develop any indepenent following outside the Congress and in the end could not really influence the political line of the Congress. However, some of its leaders played a very big organisational and political role during the 1942 struggle and later on formed a radical wing outside Congress.

The sum total of the 1930 struggle controlled and directed by the Congress leadership was the achievement of Provincial Ministries and diversion of mass activity to parliamentary activity. The Congress leadership was capable of mounting the offensive aginst the British by calling all sections of people to enter the arena. They had the power to paralyse the means of communication and industrial activity bringing the whole administration to a standstill. But they prefered to use less effective means of struggle. Once again class limitations of the Congress leadership

imposed a petty compromise on the people and frustrated their aspirations.

Because of the earlier alienation between the Hindus and the Muslims the militancy of the Muslim masses was more and more diverted into anti-Congress channels. Muslim masses were now being instilled with the idea of the Hindu domination. This alienation rapidly increased as the Congress gained strength. The demand for the separation of Muslim majority provinces from India began to be voiced more and more by the Muslim League. The Congress leadership failed to stop this trend and win back the Muslim masses. The lost initiative could have been restored by a revolutionary struggle but the leadership was not prepared for that. That is why the prospect before India was freedom and partition.

The outbreak of the war saw the National Congress stronger than ever, though isolated from the muslim mass. The Left was too weak to affect its policies. The Communist Party with little influence among the peasant mass and not a completely dominant force in the working class was also unable to press effectively for its policy of lining the agrarian struggle with the struggle for national liberation.

With the rise of fascism in Europe and the world-wide exposure of imperialism the Congress had made several declarations on international developments which voiced the demands of progressive forces and freedom-loving people. Jawaharlal Nehru was the main advocate of this outlook which linked the progress and interests of the Indian freedom struggle with progressive international developments against imperialism and fascism.

The Congress therefore correctly understood the nature of the Anglo-German war as an imperialist war. It said in its resolution "the Committee cannot associate themselves or offer any cooperation in a war-which is conducted on imperialist lines and which is meant to consolidate imperialism in India and elsewhere". The resolution added that the Indian people must have the right of self-determination, framing their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external interference, and must guide their own policy.

The Working Committee put a poser to the British imperialists who were telling their own people that they were waging war for democracy to eliminate fascism. In its resolution the Working Committee called upon the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms what their war aims were in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new world order that was envisaged and how these aims would influence British policy in India. Do they include the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy will be guided in accordance with the wishes of our people.

The British Government offered only to set up a consultative committee.

The Congress however had not yet decided to act. It was waiting for events. In the meanwhile the working class of Bombay under the leadership of the Communist Party of India organised a protest strike against the imperialist war in which more than a lakh of workers participated. They raised the slogans 'down with imperialist war', 'long live the Indian independence' and expressed their solidarity with the international working class in the struggle against war.

Quick developments took place in the following months. The collapse of France left England on the verge of a Nazi invasion. The Congress offered to cooperate with the Government on the condition that Indian independence was recognised and a Provisional National Government at the centre established which though formed as a transitory measure, would enjoy the confidence of all elected members in the central legislature. If these measures are adopted it will enable the Congress to throw in its full weight in their efforts for the effective organisation for the defence of the country. The resolution amounted to rejection of Gandhi's line of non-violence in relation to external defence.

In the meanwhile, the Communist Party was calling on the people to resist all war efforts and oppose the British. But they continued to move at a snail's pace. The Government in the meanwhile was attacking all Left forces. The CPI was banned, most of its leaders were arrested, others had to go underground, most organisations led by it were banned. Other radical elements in the national movement who took an anti-war stand were also jailed. Gandhi however started only a new satyagrah asserting the right of freedom of speech, the right to speak against the war from a pacifist point of view. The satyagrahis were chosen by Gandhi. Vinoba Bhave was the first satyagrahi. Persons appointed by Gandhi informed the police as to when and where they intended to offer satyagrah. This could hardly be described as a struggle for asserting India's right to complete independence. Even then more than 20000 people offered satyagrah in 1941.

In the later half of 1941, a profound change occured in the international situation. Hitler attacked the Soviet Union. A British-Soviet understanding emerged to fight Hitler. Japan attacked the Far-East and it brought the Soviet Union, Britain, United States and China together to face Japanese imperialism and the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis.

Jawaharlal Nehru understood the change. He said in December, 1941 "the progressive forces of the world are now aligned with the group represented by Russia, Britain, America and China". This was precisely the stand the CPI took declaring that a successful outcome of the war against Hitler would be a people's victory leading to drastic changes in the world situation, weakening imperialism and facilitating the struggle of the Indian people for freedom. The imperialists would not be in a position to resist the demand for independence.

Jailed Congress leaders were released but the Government refused to respond positively to the situation. In December 1941 the Congress passed a resolution saying "while there has been no change in British policy towards India the Committee must neverthless take into consideration the new world situation which has arisen by the development of war and its approach to India. The sympathies of the Congress must inevitably lie with the people who are subject to aggression and are fighting for their freedom ; but only a free and independent India can be in a position to undertake the defence of the country on a national basis."

The British refusal to make satisfactory concessions derived from the chink in the nationalist armour—the isolation of the Congress from the Muslim masses with the League now in a position to counter every move of the Congress and advance its own claims to dilute Congress claims. By 1940, the demand for Pakistan had become the central demand of the Muslim League. Beginning with the demand for a Muslim majority province it became more and more strident with inability of the Congress to counter it. Muslim soldiers formed a substantial part of the Indian Army, perhaps 50 percent, and as long as the League stood opposed to the Congress and did not tamper with the loyalty of the Muslim soldier the Government felt safe.

The Congress had rejected the demand for seccession in clear terms. The Poona resolution of the Congress passed in 1945 reiterated its stand when it said "The Congress cannot agree to any proposal to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component state or a territorial unit to secede from the Indian Union or Federation. The Congress as the Working Committee declared in April 1942 has been wedded to Indian freedom and unity and any break in that unity would be in the modern world, where people's minds inevitably think in terms of ever larger federations, injurious to all concerned. Nevertheless the Committee also declared that it cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in the Indian Union against their declared and established will. At the same time the Congress was prepared to make concessions to some of the federating units—Muslim majority provinces. Its 1946 election programmes stated "in order to give the maximum freedom to the costitutional units there may be a minimum list of common and essential subjects, and a further optional list of common subjects which may be accepted by such units as desired to do so."

But the Muslim mass was not within the reach of the Congress. The League leaders mainly representing the Muslim landlords were in no mood to move an inch from the demand of Pakistan and separation. The Gordian knot could have been cut only by a genuine revolutionary appeal to all toilers to combine the fight for national liberation with the fight against feudal exploitation. But this was neither the outlook nor the line of the Congress. It should be realised that the Muslim masses were also

boiling over with indignation against the British Government. This was seen during the Naval rebellion when Hindu and Muslim ratings joined hands and raised the flag of the Congress, the League and the Communist Party on the rebelling ships, when Hindu and Muslim workers in Bombay raised barricades in support of the fighting ratings and faced the British troops and the armoured corps. But their anger was diverted to the fear of Hindu domination.

The Congress therefore sought a short and swift struggle. The Crips Commission failed to offer anything other than a rehash of certain earlier proposals.

The Congress was in a dilemma. It did not want to embarrass the defence of China or Russia "where freedom is precious and must be preserved or to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the United States". (August 8 Resolution of 1942). The resolution further stated that an immediate ending of British rule in India was an urgent necessity both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. On the declaration of Indian independence, a Provisional Government was to be formed with the cooperation of the principal parties and the groups in the country. Its primary function would be to defend India and resist aggression together with the allied powers. It, therefore, launched its August movement without a proper programme. At the same time, in order to bring sufficient pressure on the Government, it did not restrict the initiative of the local leaders and the masses. It thought that the pressure generated by the spontaneous outburst of anger would force the British Government to compromise. After the arrest of all the Congress leaders the great outburst of anger throughout the country was such as had hardly been seen before. There being no strict inhibitions against violent activities the police were often resisted with arms. Thousands were arrested and put in jail, many were shot dead and the Left elements in the Congress went underground to organise the struggle and to give it a cohesive character. It was obvious that the Congress leaders were not seriously utilising their capacity to paralyse and bring the Government to a standstill. Had the Congress given a call to the Railway and Transport Workers of India the entire transport and communications could have been brought to a standstill. But then it would have had a tremendous effect on the peasantry and would have led to incalculable consequences. Faced with the dual responsibility of organising the struggle and at the same time not hitting at the vital point in the Government's armour, the 1942 struggle launched by the Congress was carried on heroically by the people but ended in a stalemate. Immediately it produced nothing. Mahatma Gandhi had to go on a fast to protest against the brutalities of the Government. Despite every chance of danger to the life of the Mahatma the Government refused to respond and Gandhi had to withdraw his fast.

Nonetheless, the Congress had again tremendously increased its pres-

tige and its influence over the masses increased. After release the Congress leaders officially withdrew the civil disobedience movement and negotiations started again. By now the post war upsurge had started. The entire country was in ferment. The formation of the Indian National Army under Subash Chandra Bose inspired the people. Subash Bose became the most popular leader and his birth day was celebrated in a manner in which no leader's birth day was celebrated before. The formation of the INA increased the militancy of the fighting Indian people. So big was the developing upsurge with arrest of the INA leaders, that Shahnavaz and others who were tried by a military court had to be released immediately after conviction. All over the country strikes and demonstrations were taking place in defence of INA officers. The Viceroy had to immediately cancel the sentence. The Government dare not face the angry people who were supporting the INA officers. Strikes and agitations started allover the country invading even the army and the airforce. At the same time, the British Army was in no mood to fight the Indian people. The young British workers who had been drafted in to the army by appeals to their sense of democracy and freedom were not prepared to use their rifle against the Indian people. The climax was reached with the rebellion of the RIN Navy in which several Indian ships were affected. Admiral Godfrey threatened to sink the entire Indian navy but the ratings held on. They raised the flags of the three parties, the Congress, League and Communist Party and addressed an appeal to the people. The Communist Party gave a call for a general strike in Bombay which was completely successful and the workers raised barricades when British armoured cars were sent to quell the rebellion. More than 400 people were killed and hundreds wounded. But the Congress which was negotiating with the British Government disapproved of the upsurge. The Naval ratings had to surrender. The British Government was already aware of the situation and realised that the Indian liberation struggle was taking a revolutionary turn. Therefore they hastened to sue for a compromise. The British Prime Minister made an announcement for settlement. The result was the Mountbatten Award which partitioned India. The British of course tried to sabotage India's achievement by giving freedom to the Indian Princes to join or not to join the Indian Union. The Congress with its grip on the people was able to exert sufficient pressure on the Princes to join the Indian Union and later on to absorb the States.

There is no doubt that the Mountbatten Award itself was a compromise between the Congress leadership and the British Government in the face of the developing revolutionary trends. The compromise programme did not mean that British imperialism retained any hold over the Indian people. The Communist Party of India at one time thought that the independence was not complete. There were powerful reasons for the assessment at the time but the bourgeois leaders asserted their power and removed all restrictions. The compromise preceded by inhuman massacres

›f lakhs of Hindus and Muslims lay in the fact that India had to be parti-
ioned. This was the big blow to the concept of Indian unity. Millions
›f people had to leave their homes and migrate to other parts to save their
ives, thousands were killed, women were raped, houses burned. The
naugurations of Indian independence did not see a war between the foreig-
ıer and the Indian people but it witnessed inhuman civil war between the
Iindus and Muslims rendered inevitable by the tactics of avoiding an
grarian revolution.

Indian National Movement

A SEMINAR on the Indian National Movement—its political, social and ideological dimension-was organised by the *Social Scientist* in New Delhi, from 27 to 29 January 1986. The keen interest that this Seminar evoked was evident not only from the presentations on the various themes, but also from the ensuing discussion in which a large number of people participated. As in the earlier *Social Scientist* seminars, the discussions were lively and thought provoking. Of particular relevance were issues relating to imperialism and class struggle within the National Movement, the role of the Left Movement, and the changing social and political perceptions of the various social groups during the nationalist struggle. Within these broad themes the issues relating to communalism also came up for discussion in the context of two presentations at the seminar, one relating to the Khilafat Movement, and one by B.T. Ranadive.

The Seminar was a significant one, for it successfully presented an alternative perspective. It attempted to reconstruct the history of national liberation struggle in India i.e., a history in which the motive forces of national liberation were recognised as the mass of peasants and workers and the lower middle classes. Almost every paper in the Seminar provided sufficient evidence to show how independence was won not by a handful of 'national leaders', but by the people who came out on the streets in millions. The Seminar also showed how the Indian National Congress, although it provided leadership to the national movement, was also the chief instrument of its containment within a framework that left the economic and political power of the ruling classes intact. Also, that it refused to restructure the ideology of nationalism to a point where the hegmony of the bourgeoisie would be threatened. A majority of the papers presented at the Seminar also challenged the trend in historiography which sees the Congress as an all-people's movement that was open to ideological transformation, which according to this trend, could not take place because of the sectarianism of the left, and its inability to comprehend the real dynamics of Indian society and some of the INC led movements. The content of some of the papers also showed that popular movements were a part of the national movement, led by the bourgeoisie, though they had their own specificities and in their aspirations went far ahead of this leadership.

Labour

The morning session on 27 January was chaired by Prof. C.P. Bhaı (Jawaharlal Nehru University). Three papers were presented, two deа with specific movements and one rather more general.

Prof. Sanat Bose' (ISI Calcutta), in his article, *Tea Garden La Movement and the role of the Non-Co-operation Activists in Assam, 192(* emphasised that the trade union movement in India was that of a spe kind. This specificity must be underlined, if we are to study it historicа Also, it was important to make a deeper study of the relation: between the specificity of the Indian labour movement, and the nati movement, as a whole. How was the message of nationalism given received ?

These two aspects of the movement were, thus, emphasised ir analysis of the Assam Tea Garden Labour Movement. The main p made by him was that apart from the economic grievances which had l a "regular feature" of the workers' lives for years, the decisive factc creating an unprecedented mass movement in 1920-21 was the "heightє class consciousness" of the workers. This manifested itself in questioning of all hither to accepted forms of oppression, specific related to the capital—labour relationship. Apart from a raise in wa the demands now included the right to passage of their cattle to grazing ground in some gardens, and also a share in profit. The dig and honour of women labour was staunchly defended, and protest launc against other oppressive practices of both the garden staff and the liceı traders, particularly as regards the illegal deduction of wages, short wei and the bad quality of ration supplied in the gardens. They also refı to give evidence against their leaders.

In making a more detailed assessment he said that although movement was motivated by "more than trade union demands", it was solely created by the local Congressmen either. "The Congress did initiate the labour movement. It was the other way round". To extent it was a spontaneous movement. But the "heightened c consciousness" manifested by the movement was "greatly strengthe by the activities of a large section of non-co-operators". The linkı between the labour and national movements were through ex-gar labour, Indian garden staff of lower ranks favourably disposed to national movement, 'lowgrade' Mussalman volunteers of the Khilafa fakir and ordinary villagers. He also emphasised the decisive role pla by the "outsiders" in this movement, mainly the non-co-operators. referred also to another "outside" element which played a crucial role the Dibru Sadia railway strike, which had a tremendous impact on gar labour, inspite of the authorities' best efforts to keep them soci isolated. A large number of the railwaymen were ex-tea garden worke

The second paper was by Prof. Ranajit Das Gupta on the *C*

plexities and Contradiction in the relationship between labour and the National Movement : The Calcutta Case, 1880s to 1920. He viewed the national movement as a merger of different strands of anti-colonial movements, not a homogenised one led by the Congress. The labour movement in his view, revealed a degree of autonomous consciousness and organisational capacity on the part of the working class, which must be emphasised in any study of the labour movement. Like Prof. Bose, he also underlined the specificities of the labour movement in India. Among other factors, the co-existence of pre-capitalist and capitalist forms of economy had critical bearing on the development of class formation, class consciousness, and the struggle of the working class. He analysed the Calcutta working class movement and showed how the linguistic and religious identities continued to prevail despite the emerging working class consciousness. The working class, at most times, revealed an "overlapping" and "sometimes contradicting levels of consciousness", with the result that it was possible to give "only a nebulous answer" as to what extent the working class had developed nationalist and class consciousness.

Prof. Ranajit Das Gupta also emphasised the paradoxical and yet crucial role of outside leadership i.e., the nationalists, in the development of working class consciousness and, therefore, also in the organisation of working class struggles. Although the nationalist leadership was not propelled by narrow ruling class interests, its movement was mediated by the complexities of the colonial structure. The Congress leadership failed to work out a coherent programme for working class struggle. It was the workers who showed initiative in protesting against capitalist exploitation and imperialism. Gandhi's role was particularly paradoxical, for even though he was against integrating the workers' struggles into the National Movement, it was his movements which led to the mobilisation of the working class for example, the non-co-operation movement.

The third paper of the session was by Thomas Isaac on *The National Movement and the Communist Party in Kerala.* He adopted as his standpoint the Marxist position that the Communist movement was "a logical and normal outcome of the class contradictions and struggle" during the national movement. He argued against those who failed to perceive this, particularly those who consider the genesis of the Party to be a result of manipulations or the sectarian understanding of the Communists. In doing so, he also questioned their contention that the Indian National Congress was not a bourgeois party, but a genuine people's party of all the anti-imperialist classes in India. In fact, in his argument he linked up the two questions, showing how the very class nature of the Congress created the necessity for a separate working class party. Given the nature of the socio-economic structure of colonial India, the agrarian revolution formed the axis of the national liberation struggle, and given the nature of class forces, the formation of the working class party and its hegemony over the anti-imperialist united front was a necessary condition. He chose

Kerala as his case study, as Kerala is also the historical experience chosen by those whom he was arguing against.

Initiating the discussion Partha Datta argued that it is doubtful whether the labour movement of the twenties was really as autonomous as appeared from Ranajit Das Gupta's paper. He pointed out that the links between what the official reports called the 'lower class movement' and the Khilafat movment, particuarly, needed to be worked out. Sanat Bose, he said, in making an assessment of the degree of class consciousness of the Assam tea labour had taken into account only the "movement." This kind of a concentration obviously leads to a failure to explain periods of apparent passivity, which are equally important for making an assessment of the level of working class consciousness. Rana Behl pointed out that till late 19th century a fair amount of concern had been shown by nationalist leaders towards working class issues, at least on paper, but later this concern was missing except may be on the part of a few individuals. He gave the examples of Kanpur. Also, in the entire proceedings of the Assam Pradesh Congress Working Committee there are no references at all to the tea garden strikes. The alienation of working class from the middle class leadership and its perceptions, as apparent from Bose's and Das Gupta's papers, was a significant factor. As possible explanation he referred to the role of language. The Hindi speaking labour was more alienated from the leadership. Capitalists too, through rigid controls, were able to isolate protest strikes in different mines or plantations. S.K. Acharya also felt that this 'alienation' was due to the fact that labour in Assam and Bengal came mainly from other areas. A. Murali pointed out that the relationship between the working class movement and the national movement as a whole should be analysed "in terms of the very structuring of nationalist ideology, at the cultural, economic and political levels." At all these levels the nationalist leadership did try to combat colonialism but "to a limited extent". The "basic structure of colonialism' was not touched, for example the land relations". The emergence in the twenties of a new vision of social transformation of the indigeneous society led to a significant development in the fight for national liberation, as well as in the relationship between labour and national movement. G.P. Deshpande questioned whether provincial case studies, as had been presented, could be sufficient bases for the level of generalisations that were being made in the papers as well as in course of the discussion. He cautioned against reading too much into the ethnic factor, i.e., the alienation of the non-Bengali working class from the Bengali leadership, as a factor for determining the relationship of the working class with the national movement. Firstly, the provincial leadership could not be completely identified with the national leadership. Secondly, the working class did have some perception of the national leadership, which was its own, and which it possibly carried from areas where it came from. Thirdly, the non-Bengali working class was not divorced from the national movement as a whole,

hough it may have been so from the provincial leadership, and it would ıot be correct to assume that working class perceptions of the national novement were limited to its perceptions of the provincial leadership.

Sanat Bose, in his response to the various comments, pointed out hat till late 19th century the middle class concern for workers was simply ı general concern for the "poor." It was only from the late 1920s that he worker is perceived as a "worker". Even then the attitudes of different Congress leaders were different, particularly after the Russian Revolution of 1917, when some of them began to fear workers' unrest, while others ike C.R. Das also felt that the Congress should organise the workers, or lse 'others' would. Sanat Bose also pointed out that the role of the eadership in the different areas of working class movement was being tudied, but the questions related to how the working class movement ffected the national leadership had been completely ignored. Nature and xtent of ethnic consciousness was important, but not of over-riding mportance. Examples of both kinds can be cited i.e , where it has been ı determining factor and where it has not. Therefore, each case must e studied in its specific situation.

Isaac did not agree with G.P. Deshpande and argued that the lessons" of Kerala, though based on a provincial case study of an area f homogeneous working class and leadership, gave scope for wider generasations. His conclusions regarding the role of the Party and the hegeıony of the working class were relevant on a wider plane. In Kerala, as lsewhere, the workers, despite unity within the factories, continued to be ominated by caste and community prejudices outside the factories until the rganisational impact of the Communist Party was felt. Chair person Prof. hambri said that trade unions must be schools for creating class and revoıtionary consciousness.

'easantry

The afternoon session began with a presentation by Kapil Kumar Delhi University) on *Ideology, Congress and Peasants in the 1930s : Class djustment or Submission ?* The agrarian question, according to Kapil umar, was the central question of social transformation in India, and one hich involved a basic and fundamental conflict. The zamindars as a ocial class, and through their class organisations, actively suppported the ritish and as such they were a constituent of the 'primary contradicon'. The implication from this premise was that an intransigent fight gainst the zamindars would not have caused a split in the national struggle, ıe landlords being already with the British

Analysing the role of the Congress relation to the peasant question he rgued that the policy of the Congress in practical terms, was one of subission rather than class adjustment with the landlords. In fact, the Conress had a definite class essence, which led it to a compromise with ndlordism.

The second paper by K.C. Suri (Nagarjuna University) was of a more eneral nature, titled, *The Agrarian Question During the National Movement* lis paper focussed on the two major approaches of the Congress and the 'ommunists respectively, regarding the agrarian and the peasant question uring the national movement. The Congress stood for limited agrarian eform, class conciliation and development of capitalism providing or the protection and promotion of private property in land. It onducted only isolated and limited struggle. Congress wanted to counter 'rom 1937) the militant peasant struggles with a two-pronged policy of ffering concessions to the peasants and at the same time harass, attack nd liquidate the political leadership of the peasant struggles.

The third paper, by Atlury Murali (Jawaharlal Nehru University), ealt with the theme *New Social and Political Perceptions and the Radicaliation of Anti-Colonial Struggles in Andhra, 1922-34.* The significance of this eriod, according to him, was that it witnessed a marked change in social nd political perceptions and nationalist intellectuals and different social lasses which, in turn, influenced the national movement in Andhra. At ne level was apparent the spread of new ideas regarding man-woman elationship, problems of women, peasantry and untouchables. At nother level different ideological positions in relation to the national beration struggle were discussed and propagated. Two contradictory isions of the future transformation of society – one rooted in bourgeois leology and the other in left ideology—started competing for both ideoloical and political hegemony over the National movement.

During the 1920s new rational social perceptions on man-woman relatinship were propagated by the young nationalists mostly under the influence f socialist ideas. As a result there was a marked change in women's consiousness. This, according to Murali, explains the phenomenal participation f woman in the 1930-34 movement, and also the articulation of their emands– social, economic and political—as part of national liberation. As result of the propagation of the universal character of 'nationalism' and 'reedom' by the younger radical nationalists, and on the other hand, the npact of the Russian Revolution of 1917, social classes like the peasantry tarted demanding the integration of their class demands into the national beration struggle.

This new wide social base of the national movement, he emphasised, vas not a consequence of the Gandhian eleven-point programme. "In act, the Gandhian eleven-point programme was only a limited response to hese changing social and political perceptions and the consequent pressure rom below on the national movement." He also explained how after heir practical experience with the Gandhian model of struggle in 1930-31 nost of the young radical nationalists became disappointed and switched ver to socialist and Communist ideas openly, leading to a conflict between wo competing ideological groups within the movement. As an example, e took up the question of untouchability. Here he showed in detail how

the Andhra nationalists closely followed the Gandhi's resolve to treat the question of untouchability clearly as a problem of "internal reform" to be carried out within the framework of his "consensus" model, which meant that the economic roots of social degradation were to be left untouched. This limitation, according to him applied equally to the questions of women's emancipation, peasants' rights, and untouchability as an issue of landlessness vs landlordism.

In presenting this main argument Murali made references to nationalist ideas on education, particularly women's education, and also analysed the content and role of the contemporary literature of the period.

The discussion in this session was initiated by David Hardiman. His comment on Kapil Kumar's paper was that in taking on Bipan Chandra as 'neo-nationalist', rather than within the framework of Marxist propositions, he was making his own propositions too simple. He essentially corroborated Kapil Kumar's thesis. With reference to Gujarat, however, he pointed out that the Congress was usually anti-landlord since the predominant power here was colonial bureaucracy, with which the landlords were allied. The Congress here was a party of the richer peasantry, a factor that explains the large scale transfer of land from the landlords to the rich peasantry after independence. In 1949, for example, in the fight against Parsi landlords, Patel even advocated violence. Kapil Kumar's thesis, according to him, failed to bring out these different tensions within the ruling classes in the rural areas. Also, as regards the Congress attitude to the *Sahukars* and the reason for not taking up the question of peasant rights was that the *Sahukars* were strong supporters of the Congress. It was not because the Congress stood for the landlords' cause. With reference to the role of the left, he agreed with Suri that the communists failed because they had not been able to correctly analyse the class differentiation within the countryside In addition, he felt, they also failed to grasp the whole socio-cultural situation, particularly the prevalence of religion in peasant consciousness He also questioned Murali's argument that the social reform movement was a major factor in radicalising the peasantry. The radicalisation was more likely a result of actual struggle, and tended to get out of the limits set by Gandhian reformers.

Prof. Bhambri pointed out that it was important that a deeper study be made of the socio-cultural philosophy of the Congress. As studies made by E.M.S. Namboodiripad and Sardesai showed, Gandhi was able to establish a linkage between this philosophy and the class question. P.C. Joshi's correspondence with Gandhi shows that the communists often had to answer questions with regard to rumours about themselves--things like group marriage, animal slaughter, etc. Thus the superstructural, religious influence of the Congress was definitely strong, and had to be grappled with. Gandhi had succeeded in identifying himself with the masses through his declarations on 'dharma' etc. All this, according to him, showed that

the nationalist leaders did not ignore the superstructure. They, solidified it.

R.K. Barik (Zakir Hussain College) questioned whether Kumar's analysis of landlords can be generalised at the all-India lev landlords, according to him, could not extend their grip over the C everywhere. Also, the duality of the Congress attitude to the la and rich peasants needs to be looked into more carefully, and spec in all areas. For example, the right wing in Bihar was not simpl landlord. It did have a broader perception of the national moveme the Congress there was not happy at all with the adjustments ma the landlords. Shahajanand, on the other hand, he pointed out, is at today as a caste leader because he did not take up the social question at all, as it had, for example, been taken up in Kerala. result Bihar is today ridden with caste politics and social conservatis

Shashi Joshi (J.N.U.) questioned Kapil Kumar's thesis at a fundamental level. The questions, according to her, must be posed i of political strategy in the over all context of a colonial situation Congress agreements with the landlords for example, help or hin anti-colonial struggle ? The landlords in Bihar and Kerala, she out, were anti-colonial. She also made reference to E.M.S. Namboo and A.K. Gopalan and writings of left radicals who entered into agre with the landlords for the same purpose i.e., anti-imperialist st According to her the Congress had been able to take over the mediator in the colonial state—both in the internal social conflicts, as those of the Indian people as a whole vis a vis the colonial state.

Indu Agnihotri (Delhi University) was critical of Kapil Kur not having been able to deal with the 'neo-nationalist' argumer manner so as to himself "escape the terms of reference set by this sc That the Congress had sided with the landlords was so evident toda result of recent historical research, that there was no need to argue on that score. She, however, raised the more general question o nationalist can right wing nationalists be ?" She cited the exan China as an illustration of the limitations of right wing natio Murali's paper, according to her, showed how historical experie struggle throws up new forms of struggle and wider questions encompass much more than simple anti-colonialism. It showed al struggles which touch the reality of the lives of people do break t community and religious links, etc.

G.P. Deshpande pointed out that Kapil Kumar's quotatio chosen from among many which could prove the opposite. As suc tations from private papers, reflecting attitudes, have their limitati source material. Also, with reference to the picture that emerged Kapil Kumar's paper of nationalists as right wing, he asked a g question as to "how right wing can nationalists get ?" The imp that emerged from Kapil Kumar's paper, according to him, wa

ɟehru was a kind of Chiang Kai Shek. The question that emerged from his, pointed out G.P Deshpande, was whether had the Congress leader-hip been decisively right wing, could such a right wing leadership have ept its control over the national liberation movement for so long ? If so, e wanted to know, how does one explain why and how was the Congress ble to accommodate the small and middle peasantry within its strategy. Ie concluded that a more central assessment of the nationalist leadership 'as necessary than what emerged from Kapil Kumar's paper. He also ıade the observation that internal class contradictions cannot attain the ıme primacy that the imperialist colonial contradiction has in a colonial tuation. The national movement was, therefore, necessarily faced with reating a United Front, and the question was primarily that of hegemony 'ithin that Front. It was, according to him, also the most serious historical nd philosophical issue of national liberation.

A. Murali wanted to know what Kapil Kumar meant by the "con-ensus model" and more specifically what he considered wrong with the ɟandhian attempt of consensus aimed at preventing the disruption of the ıulti-class resistance to imperialism. He too felt that the question was ne of hegemony within the national liberation front.

Suri pointed out that there was a clear distinction between class djustment, compromise and submission. Primarily the question of Con-ress attitude to landlords was a question of whether the Congress was repared to accept the dominance of the landlords It was clear from ıe experience of the national movement, as well as from the political ructure created in 1947 that the bourgeoisie compromised with land-ɔrdism in its own interests. Referring specifically to the nature of boure-ɔis compromise he said that it did not mean a protection of imperialist ıterests, but a compromise in terms of creating conditions for the deve-ɔpment of capitalism in India, a compromise as regards the transforma-on of Indian society.

Kapil Kumar, during the course of his reply, agreed that the Com-ıunist Party was too small and ineffective to pose a serious alternative to ıe Congress. Also, its emphasis on the working class as the vanguard f the revolution resulted in its not paying sufficient attention to the rganisation of the peasantry. Gandhi, on the contrary, saw the real ɔtential of the peasantry. Another reason why the peasantry continued ɔ support the Congress was that often, as a result of its own specific per-ɔptions, it did not see the contradiction between the Congress programme ıd its own interests. In fact, it perceived Congress directives in its own ay. For example, when Gandhi burnt foreign cloth in Bombay, the ɔasants took it as a message to fight their oppressors and burnt talukdari fices. Answering to David Hardiman, A. Murali clarified that he was ɔt arguing that social reform was a major factor in radicalizing the pea-ntry. He said that basically he was analysing the spread of new socio-ɔlitical ideas and their radicalizing influence on the consciousness of

peasantry and other social classes. This shift in peasants consciousness h argued had reflected in national movement during 1930-34.

Nationalism and Imperialism

The second day was fully devoted to the broad theme of 'Nationalism and Imperialism'. The first presentation was by Prof. Bipan Chandra (Jawaharlal Nehru University) on the *Struggle for the Ideological Transformation of the Indian National Congress in the 1930s.* The topic, he felt, was relevant as it threw up the problem of how the left should operate in parliamentary conditions. He characterised his own paper as an attempt at "self-criticism from within the broad Left", and an attempt also to analyse the reasons for the failure of the Left to gain "ideological hegemony" over the national movement.

His paper was based on the premise that the Indian National Movement was an "all-People's movement", not only in its social composition but also in the opportunity that it afforded to different social and political groups for active participation and leadership. The Indian National Congress, which provided leadership to this movement, was also open to political debate and "transformation towards a socialist perspective". But this opportunity was "missed" by the Left, primarily because of its sectarianism. "The subordination of the primary contradiction (i.e., between British imperialism and the Indian people as a whole) to the secondary contradiction (i e., within the Indian society) was, according to him, a part of Comintern strategy since 1920, and the Communists had also accepted it. But in concrete practice they failed to evolve a strategy in keeping with this theoretical understanding." They, therefore, according to him "chose to fight the battle for socialist hegemony on a wrong terrain and on wrong issues and thus gradually frittered away the ground that attraction of socialism and Marxism had created."

His conclusion was that a popular mass movement, in colonial conditions, should necessarily be open-ended, without definite hegemony or class character. "The socialist alternative, therefore, had to be posed not in terms of its leadership by the working class or a working class party but in ideological terms, that is, as a moral and intellectual and social developmental alternative and not a class alternative."

E M S. Namboodiripad of C.P.I.(M) countered this historiographical approach in his presentation on *The Left in India's Freedom Movement and in Free India.* He partly agreed with the critique of the Left made by Bipan Chandra, but pointed out that his had been a very biased presentation, and methodologically a very weak presentation, because it did not contain a similar critique of the bourgeoisie and the Indian National Congress during the freedom movement. He himself was prepared to recognise both the positive and the negative features of the bourgeoisie. The early economists like Nauroji had definitely taken a very bold step in exposing the colonial exploitation of India by Britain. But at the same time this

neering nationalist critique had its limitations and should not be con-
ed with Lenin's Marxist critique and analysis of imperialism, as Bipan
andra often claimed.

The essence of the struggle of the bourgeoisie, in spite of its mass
racter and militancy, was a struggle for a compromise that would leave
bourgeois-landlord system intact. Gandhi and Nehru, its leaders,
e essentially representatives of this struggle for compromise. That is
y the Congress envisaged the 1942 as a "short and swift struggle" (Quit
ia resolution), and immediately with its suppression entered into a
gotiated settlement on terms which proved disastrous for the country."
ough Gandhi personally felt sorry, the Congress, under his leadership,
se freedom at the cost of the division of the country. The point at
ch the struggle ended, for them, shows that theirs was a politics of
npromise not merely in short-term or tactical terms, but in terms of
ir entire strategy which ended with the emergence of the Indian ruling
sses as dominant in 1947.

He also elaborated on many positive features of the left to balance
picture presented by Bipan Chandra. Though Left had not been able
prevent the bourgeois compromise, it had developed as an alternative
he 1930s and 1940s. In terms of ideology, programme and world out-
k, the Communist Party had something qualitatively different to put
ward. It was able to forge an independent unity of the working class.
iods when Communists were Secretaries of the Provincial Congress
nmittee in Kerala were periods of struggle between the PCC in Kerala
the Central Congress leaders. On the question of sectarianism he
nted to the significance of the struggle within the Congress against
ht sectarianism because of which the Left faced a problem in continu-
with the United Front tactics.

Sumit Sarkar, the discussant for this session, also raised a number of
blems, mainly methodological, with Bipan Chandra's paper. With
flation of data and facts Bipan Chandra had according to him, pre-
ed a very distorted picture of what actually happened. All specific
i, for example, was correct but the total picture was wrong, particularly
emphasis on the pro-poor orientation of the Congress. For a balanced
v he pointed out, it was necessary to recall the total indifference and
i hostility of the Congress to worker and peasant issues for a consider-
period of time. As illustration he referred to the Bengal Tenancy
endment Act.

A second problem he raised was that of the primacy of primary
tradiction versus secondary contradiction. He did not agree with Bipan
ndra that the mixing up of anti-colonial and anti-feudal issues by the
was 'not good'. In actual fact, it was not possible to draw "a Chinese
l" between the two as the primary contradiction operated through and
ked itself out through the secondary contradictions. The British could
India so long precisely because of the configuration of social forces—

nd through class alliances, land settlements with princes and zamindars, nd sometimes even with the bourgeoisie. Unless one understood this iere was no meaning in characterising the colonial state as semi-hegemoic, as Bipan Chandra himself did.

He also disagreed with the kind of parallel that Bipan Chandra drew etween China and India in the late 1930s. In China, he pointed out, the panese invasion did not upset the existing hierachies. Therefore, even sted interests like warlords and landlords could be moved by patriotic ntiments Also the Japanese had not had time to build up a base of operation through social alliances in the way that Britain had been able do in India. Secondly, the Chinese communists were in a position of nsiderable strength vis a vis the Koumintang, whereas the Indian comunists were much weaker and could not afford to ally with the landlords om this position without getting into tailism.

Besides in concrete terms, an 'alternative ideological hegemony' as oan Chandra saw it, meant that the left should only talk of socialism d not act at all. Also, the idea (alternative ideological hegemony) was idered absolutely meaningless if one thought, as he did that the Congress sition was throughout correct, and the only position possible in the en situation.

The most important historiographical questions, however, according him, were studies of the different social groups, their relative autonomy l strength, how the Congress was perceived by these different groups, v the Congress message was received, how did Gandhi remain so oular with the masses.

Mihir Bhattacharya also commenting on Bipan Chandra's paper, ued that the data used by him in fact pointed to conclusions very diffe- t from his. The weakness of his perspective was that he looked i significant period of India's history with "the people left out."

Thomas Isaac argued that class adjustment should not mean class 'ender. Independent organisations of the working class were important. weakness of Bipan Chandra's entire presentation was that he did not sider working class participation and leadership necessary for national ration. He looked at working class and peasant movements from withhe framework of Congress strategy for national liberation. On the er hand, one of the significant aspects of the Malabar peasant movet was that it was the only one led by the working class.

Harbans Mukhia also disagreed with Bipan Chandra's separation of the iary and secondary contradictions. He pointed out that in actual fact wo operate in conjunction, and it is the internal contradictions which a distinct character to every national liberation movement, and also rmine its post-independence development. The implications of Bipan idra's perspective are, however, that all national liberation movements ssentially the same, irrespective of their internal subsidiary contradic-, a factor that had led to his making a mechanical comparison bet-

ween the Indian and Chinese situations. He also disagreed that there was any possibility of an ideological transformation of the Congress by the left. That would have been possible only in a situ.tion where there were no basic class differences between the two. Given this fundamental difference, however, it was absolutely necessary that the left should have posed an alternative organisation. Bipan Chandra's focus on the Right wing and Left wing, however, leads to his ignoring the class character of the Congress, and consequently, to his criticism of the left for posing an alternative that went beyond the Congress strategy.

Kapil Kumar pointed out that when Mao advocated class adjustment, the landlords as a bloc in China had not gone over to the side of imperialism as they did in India. Also, the question of agrarian revolution was never forgotten by him. Therefore, it was not correct to equate the Chinese and Indian situations. He also pointed to the prosecutions and suppression of the kisan sabhas and their leaders by the Congress to refute the argument that the Congress was open to ideological transformation.

Radhakant Barik argued that class struggle had led to the consolidation of Congress as a *Party* which was opposed to another alternative. It took definite initiatives to throw out the communists and even socialists, precluding all possibilities of its social or ideological transformation.

Indu Agnihotri pointed out that Bipan Chandra was, on the one hand, using Marxist categories, method and tools to criticize the left, but, in the same paper, the bourgeoisie was being analysed by him on the basis of entirely different categories. It was not "correct to use the Marxist stick to beat Marxism and a bourgeois stick to beat the bourgeoisie", as it meant a different criteria for assessing each.

In his reply Bipan Chandra reiterated that he was not advocating class surrender. What he had wanted to stress was the specific form of class struggle to be adopted in a given colonial situation. He also denied that he counterposed the struggles against imperialism, and the Indian ruling classes. He had, he said, only emphasised as Gramsci had done, that the national liberation movement should be a national popular movement, not a regional or one class movement. Also, he did not agree that the Indian national movement was led by the bourgeoisie. As regards 1947, he said it involved a full transfer of power, not partial.

E.M.S. Namboodiripad in his reply to Bipan Chandra pointed out that Tripuri represented a sectarianism of the right, not that of the left. The Malabar struggle showed that the Congress was in league with the landlords. On a broad scale, the struggle within the Congress was an aspect of class struggle in the national movement as a whole. Without waging this struggle it was not possible to carry forward the liberation struggle towards a new social vision of life.

Regional Studies

The afternoon session carried over similar questions to the regional

level. Mrinal Basu's paper dealt primarily with the processes that went into giving the national movement a mass character by the 1920 (*Class and Politics in Bihar 1905-1920*). He illustrated the forms in which this period witnessed the emergence of four distinct tiers of political leadership—that of a new group of middle class leaders having little experience of institutional politics who owed allegiance to Gandhi, the rich or middle peasants in the rural areas, and also the agricultural labourers, apart from the old zamindar leadership. He brought out the linkages between these development in Bihar and those at the all-India level. He also showed the mediatory role of communal and regional factors. Regionalism he argued, grew as a result of newspaper propaganda and the introduction of local self-government, particularly in those municipalities where the municipal commissions were divided into 'Bengali and Bihari' groups.

The caste factor was also introduced into Bihar politics at the lower level with the formation of associations of Bhumihars, Ahirs, Sonars and Sahu Vaishyas. Eventually, Bihar leaders could exercise power only by utilising caste or communal organisations.

Basu was able to show in his paper how these factors coloured the Congress experience of the Champaran struggle, as well as the Home Rule agitation and the following Khilafat and Non-co-operation movements and also how the growth of these factors was not unlinked to Congress politics.

Dr. Saral Chatterjee (Calcutta), in his presentation on *Freedom Struggle and the Emergence of the Communists as a Political Force*, made the point that it was the colonial policy of the British and the mid way suspension of the anti-imperialist mass movement which created the conditions for the growth of communism in India. The Communists became a major political force only as a result of their active role in the working class movement, as well as their consistent patriotism, not so much as a result of their tactics of United Front which, in practice was, in certain phases, faulty.

Michael Tharaken (Kerala) presented a paper on the specific nature of the *Travancore State Congress, 1931-1947*. He countered opinions which regard state people's movements as those of communal interest groups, as well as those which see them as an off shoot of the national movement. He argued that the historical condition which resulted in the emergence of a bourgeoisie opposed to the existing state structure in Travancore, also gave to it a limiting regional character. Therefore, while it led the people's movement in Travancore through the State Congress, and also adopted the tactics and slogans of the national movement, it was too weak to withstand the suppressive powers of the state. The specific nature of the weakness of the bourgeoisie and the Travancore State Congress he traced to the social origins of this bourgeoisie. It drew its strength from the growing commercial agriculture, a number of business and manufacturing activities and the emerging educated professionals, but was forced, in the

specific structure of the Travancorian economy operating under coloni paramountcy, to operate only at regional levels, and develop only region contacts and relations. Its having originated from non-Hindu and nor caste Hindu communities was another source of its weakness, given th essentially Hindu edifice of the traditional Travancore society.

P. Sudhir (Hyderabad University) in his paper *Imperialism an Nationalism : the Ideological dimensions,* analysed the processes whereb the "psychological incorporation of a subject people into the imperi system" was accomplished by the "production and reproduction of a imperial ideology." Passive acceptance of the imperial dominance wa attained either by making Indians feel inferior to the alien rulers, or b the dissemination of myths about the permanence of the Empire. Anoth way was the introduction of the English language and a western system c education, and the subsequent flow of new ideas into India to integra the emerging middle class.

The ideological sources of nationalism, an ideology of fundament contradiction to imperialism, was also the result of these very idea According to him, "just as in the material plane imperialism sowed th seeds of its own dissolution, on the ideological plane too the new idea could be and were used to construct an anti-imperialist nationali ideology." He also argued that there was a conjuncture between advance capitalism, a more aggressive imperialism and the growth of an imperi ethos. For example, the period of merchant capitalism, was not characterise by an ideology of dominance, whereas the later period was reflected in th defeat of the orientalists and the triumph of anglicists, along with th propagation of the idea that only the British could protect the oppresse poor in India. Finally, he made the point that alternative ideologies emerge also as a result of the activities of other social groups in England, as the is a "range of variations available in any given social formation. On the other hand, the Indian national movement was one decisive facto contributing to the emergence of alternative ideologies in the imperiali country itself.

The discussion on the papers in this session was initiated by Bari He argued that Basu's analysis in looking at Bihar politics in terms o Bihari middle class versus Bengali middle class was too simplistic. E 1890 s, before Gandhi's Champaran struggle, Bihar was already in soci turmoil and had a long history of agrarian struggles. The middle rank o landlords, whose children were educated, tried to confront the bigg landlords who were in alliance with the British. The British governme in turn was interested in making Bihar a separate state. Also, it is on in the 1930s that the peasantry was organised by the landlords in cas organisations, and on caste issues. The agricultural labourers as a cla did not launch any movement in the 1930s.

Thomas Isaac, commenting on Michael Tharaken's paper, said th he should have given more emphasis on the links between the Nation

Movement and the State Congress, as the weak bourgeoisie in the states tried to legitimise its demands by forging links with the National movement. The nationalist leadership, on its part, refused to intervene in the States people's movements. Had it done so, he pointed out, they would have become part and parcel of the national movement.

Sanat Bose wanted to know why Basu had not said anything on the tribals who formed an important segment of Bihar society. On P. Sudhir's paper he commented that mere introduction of English education cannot be understood as propagation of imperialist ideology.

S.K. Acharya felt that Sudhir should have referred also to the subservience of British workers to imperialist ideology.

Suri raised the question as to how did it happen that although in India the agrarian movements began as movements of agricultural workers, organised by the bourgeoisie or the communists, they soon assumed a secondary position, while the movements of the rich and middle peasantry were given more importance.

A. Murali, with reference to Tharaken's paper, pointed out that had the peasant interests and those of the urban bourgeoisie been somehow translated into nationalist ideology it would have given a new dimension to these movements. While material conditions are crucial for such qualitative advance, the transformation of ideology is equally important. In the 1920s there was, according to him, scope for such a transformation of the States people's movements. As regards Sudhir's paper, he felt it tended to over emphasise the role of introduction of English education. In doing that he had negated two significant aspects. One was, that the complex process of the structuring of colonial ideology and the establishment of hegemony over the minds of colonised people was not uniform in all the colonies—for example, see the cases of Africa, China and India. Two, this hegemony was not preceded by the total destruction of indigeneous culture in India unlike in case of some African colonies. The mechanics applied, the response and assimilation of imperialist ideology were different. Therefore, in each of these areas a lot was borrowed from the traditional system, a factor leading to, in some cases (example India), the revival of many backward cultural and ideological elements. It was important to remember this complexity in the context of which the struggle for counter-hegemony had to be waged.

Iqtidar Alam Khan pointed out that it was not only amongst the educated that the imperialist ideology could be located. The colonial government, deliberately circumventing the educated sections, reached across to the common people and created its myths of hegemony. This imperialist ideology, according to him, continued to be bolstered even after Independence. As examples he pointed towards the ideas of the Pathans, the Sikhs and the Gurkhas as being of a martial race, and Muslims all over the world owing their first loyalty to one leader, the Caliph. Even Syed Ahmed Khan was used for playing up this last myth.

In his reply Sudhir gave as examples of introduction of imperialist ›logy through education the statement of Macaulay and James Mill, the struction of Indian history from an imperialist perspective, a particular ion of civil society, all of which legitimised British rule in India. He :ed that the internationalisation of this ideology was secured at :rent levels in different ways, and that the resurrection of tradition n encouraged an imperialist ethos. Although it was true that each of propagation of imperialist ideology was specific, there were some mon features, for example the ideas of white man's burden and ‹wardness of colonies.

mmunal and other aspects

The first paper in this session (on the 29th January) was presented by hi Pradhan, on *The Indian Revolutionaries' Role in the First World* . Essentially he brought to light and analysed, in the context of the logical positions of the Second International, two memorandums nitted to the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee of the Second Interna- al by the European Central Committee of Indian Nationalists, and by . Sattar and Prof. Jabbar of Delhi on behalf of foreign and Indian ılims. The first one was written in German and the other in Swedish. memo submitted by Profs. Sattar and Jabbar contained sixty nples of British oppression in India, particularly on Muslims, and ecific statement that world peace or liberation of the working class not possible without freedom of the colonies. They presented a que of the Socialist International, and were aware of the link between alist revolution in Europe and national liberation. He also referred ıe participation of the Indian nationalist leaders in various Congresses ıe Second International, and pointed out that the British labour leader ısay Macdonald had been opposed to this participation. S.K Acharya ented a paper on the *Ethnic Aspects of the National Processes in India : es, Tribes and Linguistic Entities*.

Mushir ul Hasan spoke on *Pan-Islamism and the National Movement*, special reference to the Khilafat movement. He argued against the ılar view of Khilafat seen as a movement of extra-territorial loyalties, one which arose as a result of heightened communal consciousness itself exacerbated communal tensions. He also argued against the s that it was irrelevant to the Indian National Movement, and had little to do with the concerns of Indian Muslims. According to him afat symbolised the fraternal link between Indian and foreign Muslims. as the revival of social Islam was seen to require political action, and lved a defence against the ideas, culture and scientific challenge of the t, so also the decline due to imperialism expressed itself in revivalist ements which, nevertheless had an anti-imperialist content. He traced 'arious elements that went into the making of such movements, more ifically the Khilafat. One element was Syed Ahmed Khan's efforts to

show the compatibility of Islam with modern ideas, which left a deep mark on the Muslim intelligentsia. Other elements were the unification of Italy and Germany which created the euphoria of an extra-territorial Muslim unity, and also the Pan Islamic ideas represented by Jalaluddin Afghani which criticised Syed Ahmed Khan for serving British interests. It was this element which became a serious political force in the Khilafat movement after his death.

As a result of this, the Khilafat, according to Mushir ul Hasan, very consciously linked the national cause to the independence of all Muslim countries from the imperialist yoke. Also, religious links did not rule out national links, or mean a break with the territorial nationalism that the Indian National Movement represented. He also disagreed that men like Mohammad Ali and Azad had used this movement for narrow sectarian ends. According to him they saw the problem of the Khilafat as part of the general issue of fight against British imperialism. The Khilafat committees in some areas were indistinguishable from kisan sabhas, workers', peasants' and women's organisations, particularly in Bengal and Punjab. The British government too, because of these links, perceived the Khilafat as a threat.

He empasised that the Ulema and Congress alliance was an important feature of Indian politics. This became evident in the Civil Disobedience Movement of the 1930s. The Ulema were not bearers of orthodoxy and conservatism, according to him, and the ideological focus of their politics needs a further re-examination, as does the role of the Jamait and its supposed incompatibility with Indian nationalism. Only their community concerns were conservative. In their political outlook they rallied behind the national movement, he pointed out, and gave the example of the Deobandis.

Sudhir Chandra, initiating the discussion, commented that Mushir ul Hasan had attributed to ideology a greater degree of autonomy and effectivity than he would have had he been commenting on a different piece of reality. He also laid stress on an enquiry into the specificities of socio-political conditions or the objective conditions of the ideology itself which gave rise to the different interpretations of people like Afghani. According to him it was "not important what so and so's ideology was, but how it was used", and how different people were differently influenced by it. He also pointed towards the Hindu bias that comes out even in the writings of people like Gandhi and Premchand. For example, Gandhi wrote that 'unfortunately the Muslims in their present state are most attracted by questions relating to their own community. We have to trace this and act upon it.' Premchand wrote that 'for Muslims Islam comes first though they are Indians also.' Writings such as these, according to him, showed how the Khilafat was regarded by its contemporaries, and are also important from the point of view of how ideology operated during the national movement, particularly with regard to the

relations between Hindus and Muslims.

Javed Alam pointed out that there were two strands of thought that emerged amongst the Muslims and competed for Muslim minds. Afghani talked of the purification of Muslim community, the revival of the past, tried to recapture the period of Muslim expansion. Syed Ahmed talked of the modernisation of the Muslim community, and was not particularly sympathetic to revivalist trends. However, leaving apart their politics, what they were doing was not very much different from what other reformers belonging to other communities were doing. He felt Hasan should have been more cautious as regards his conclusions. The Pan-Islamists were not really responsive to the realities of the state they were living in, and Pan-Islamism as a movement, had by the 1930s become a spent ideology and was replaced by various revivalist strands. One permanent feature of this in India was a belief not only in the cultural or moral superiority or glory of the past, but the integral tying up of religiosity with the idea of a certain kind of state Thus the finality of the message of *Quran* became an important component of the politics of revivalism, at the same time that a certain kind of state and polity became part of religious revivalism. This shows that commitment to nationalism or secularism in religious movements of revivalism can only be tenuous.

According to him, there were no major attempts to come to terms with problems of Muslims in contemporary times, for example with the question of what kind of politics was relevant for Muslims in a country like India. Therefore, Khilafat did not represent any major, continuous or long term trend. He also pointed out that in no Muslim society, including India, has there been a history of the emergence of democratic theories on the basis of which Muslims built their movements. On the contrary, religion itself became the basis for participation in democratic movements. He further pointed towards the dangers of this, as evident in Iran where it has led to a crypto-fascist movement. Khilafat too did not leave any ideological or political basis for the two communities to come together.

According to Iqtidar Alam Khan the Khilafat was a turning point among the Muslims in India. It was a historical fact that before the Khilafat agitation there was no sense of communal identity among the Muslim masses. Efforts of Muslim reformers had activated only the middle classes. It was the Khilafat movement which activated the Muslim masses on a large scale, rallied them to the non-cooperation movement, but on a revivalist basis. Different nationalities, regions and castes got united on a common platform in a search for identity, which was religious in nature. The demand for Pakistan was the culmination of the nature of mobilisation process that Khilafat represented, the kind of identity put forward by it. Also, although the history of communal tensions pre-dated British rule, the late 1920s saw a qualitatively new slage in the history of communal tensions and communal writing. As regards the role of the

Ulema, he said that once they had prepared the ground by mobilisin; the pargana level the traditionally educated and sometimes even modern educated Muslims, had stepped in providing to this activated n , a new kind of leadership leading them towards communalism. Maul Azad lost all influence later when he became an atheist, but his ear ideas became the basis for revivalist ideology and fundamentalism— idea of Muslims a constituting one nation, his idea that religion ; politics cannot be separated and that Islam was not only a religion, bı perfect code. Madani's influence was limited to certain areas where was accepted as religious leader.

Sanat Bose, intervening in the debate, said that Hunter should mentioned as one of the creators of Pan-Islamism. He wanted to kn what was the nature of the struggle between the conservatives and liberals, and what was the extent of Muslim participation in the S Satyagraha movement. He also pointed towards rise of commu historiography after the Khilafat.

Mihir Bhattacharya raised the general problem of why and how a certain juncture certain stuctures of ideology came to the forefront. is important to study the relation between ideology and action in specific historical context. Pan-Islamism should be studied in relation the building of a nation.

Prof. Bhambri pointed out that with Khilafat, as with the natioı movement in general under the leadership of Gandhi, religion became important factor and this weakened the idea of the nation, a higl category. New categories of struggle which tried to mobilise people secular demands became submerged in revivalism and appeals to religic symbols, becoming a threat to independence and an undivided India.

Kapil Kumar emphasised that the use of religion must not be se uniformly as a negative aspect of every movement. Religious symbı were often used only as cultural idioms of discourse. He gave the example Baba Ram Chandra's use of *Ram Charitamanas*, and also pointed out th the Khilafat leaders, while agitating among the peasants, raised questio relating to peasant grievances, not to Turkey at all. As regards t increase in the incidence of communal riots after the Khilafat-Non-c operation phase, he said that sometimes riots did take place because communal reasons, but more often it was on caste issues, and partly th was the result of the policies of the Congress leaders. They brought caste issues, and also talked in terms of Muslim and Hindu communitie particularly on questions of separate electorate.

To Murali the basic question was one of a dialectical link betwe Pan-Islamism, their material and cultural interests within India, and the contradiction with colonialism and thereby their links with the nation movement. What should have been emphasised in the paper was the wa in which the common people of Muslim faith saw this basic contradictioı as well as their inner contradictions, for they were part and parcel of th

lian reality and the perceptions shaped by specific social and economic ations. It was not sufficient to study the mobilisation process adopted the intelligentsia, as all the time there was a disjunction between what projected and the level at which it was internalised at any given point of ne. Murali felt that from Hasan's presentation it appears as if the uslims in India were a separate island untouched by the effects of colonial ploitation and cultural and social degradation, and that when their pport was needed during non-co-operation it was done by the nationalist dership solely by structuring their Pan-rslamism into the non-coopera-n movement. For that matter, he said, it was doubtful whether the ilafat agitation really succeeded in bringing the Hindus and Muslims gether at the level of religion first and then at political level, as it was nerally assumed, in relation to non-cooperation. During non-cooperation Andhra both Hindus and Muslims participated together in a procession by (Hindu modes of) Bhajan marcles with *Radha* as a religious symbol. is could be achieved only because there was a different basis for unity, ich was secular and political i.e., anti-colonial consciousness.

K.N. Pannikar said that the nature of the problem for him was how ideological questions raised by Mushir ul Hasan relate to other nensions. For example, religion was not an external factor brought o politics. In the process and nature of mediation, religion was involved the entire process of socialisation, of evolving consciousness. How s the Khilafat ideology linked to the evolution of this consciousness, way the idea of Khilafat evolved, how it developed in the rural areas, y when it came to a crunch they looked to intervention of Muslim ders from outside—these, according to him were important questions they involved many imperatives important from a cultural point of w.

In his reply Mushir ul Hasan expressed agreement with Pannikar. the given structure of Muslim society the Ulema and the Pirs had 'eloped structures of communalism which they used during the tional Movement. There was also the question, however, why did ndhi pursue accomodative nationalism. This brings to the forefront the ious forms of imperatives that came into play. He also agreed with other observation that the Muslim participation in the Civil Disobedience vement was much less compared to the Non-co-operation, but that was ause the issues and degree of enthusiasm in the 1920s was of a different ure from the 1930s. He did not think that the Khilafatists were ocates of separatism, and it did have a progressive strand out of which ple like Muzaffar Ahmed emerged.

tional Movement and Literature

The first paper in this session was presented by Tanika Sarkar (Delhi iversity). The title of her paper was *Representations of Peasants and nen in Nationalist Bengali Literature*. In it she argued that the national

movement led to the growth of a new iconography in nationalist literature, which reflected the social and political dimension of this movement. The dominant image was that of the country 'sacrilized and femininised.' The *desh* was abstracted from the people and seen personified as a goddess, and people seen as children of and subordinate to this goddess. The country was also the mother depicted as either within or Kali. As a within what was put across was the measure of her shame and degradation, as in the writings of Bankimchandra, where she appears as a woman having lost her shame, an inversion of the ordered world (woman on top). In others, for example Mukunda Das, she is seen as the principle of female strength, glorging in her violence and strength (Durga as *Mahisaasuramardini*).

The empire on the other hand, she pointed out, was represented by the lion. The complete image, therefore was that of the dominant masculine form versus the defeated and enslaved woman mother. The authentic *santan* of this mother were shown as women and peasants, the former because of their biological role, the latter because of their work on land. They reflect the significance attached to the mobilisation of both these groups during the national movement.

These images also, however, reflect the limits of this movement. As Tanika Sarker pointed out, nationalist literature also reinforced the idea of the supreme importance of the household for the woman. So, while on the one hand, there seemed to be the extinction of the distinction between private and public space and the extension of the household and 'feminization' of the national movement through the importance given to spinning (a woman's activity traditionally), on the idea of women serving food to feed Congress volunteers everyday, in their active participation in the movement, on the other hand, the women were expected to learn of patriotism through the household, not through reading (a play by Mukunda Das). Again while traditional constraints on women, like purdah, etc., were attacked by nationalists, there was only a limited range of activities that were allowed to them, as in one song, it was generally to be accepted that the *Gita* was an important aspect of women's education and the household takes the place of the *Gita* in governing her.

Similarly, as she pointed out, the peasants were conceived of in similar subordinate terms. Nationalist propaganda and local poems generalised about the relative importance of food and cash crops and spoke of the of "cash crops" as leading to hunger and starvation. No fundamental clash of interests was seen between the tenant and the landlord. Calcutta was depicted as luring contented peasants, to some killing, and ill paying office jobs.

Finally, Gandhi was seen as incarnation of Chaitanya, nationalism as a new religion, the loyalists were accordingly the godless, and British Raj was to become Gandhi Raj, *swaraj* to become *swaraj*, which means good government. The peasants and women, in this scheme, were seen as

best subjects of nationalism, primarily because they were uncontaminated by western education. This was an important point made by her, as it shows significance that tradition was to be given by a section of the leadership, particularly in their espousal of revivalist elements as opposed to reason and rationality which were given by them the garb of westernism, and have British rule over India.

Mihir Bhattacharya had prepared a paper on *Bankim Chandra Chattopadhayya's novel Durgeshnandini*, which dealt primarily with the conditions that went into the production of such texts in the 19th century. He also described the contemporary concerns and needs as reflected in the novel. It represented the romanticist strand in the nationalist ideology. Through it, according to him, Bankimchandra had tried to say that the prevailing brutality and violence could be criticized through a concept of heroism and chivalry. Heroism and chivalry, centred around the man and woman relationships, is also produced as a kind of critique of the existing violence and oppression in the man-woman relationship He argued that romantic nationalism was sought to be created in terms of the past by 19th century literature.

In the discussion which followed Sanat Bose wanted to know how Bankim's novel was received by the reading public. He pointed out that one novel was insufficient to explain the entire content of Bankimchandra's work, leave alone the 19th century novel.

Alok Rai commented on Mihir Bhattacharya's statement that literary evidence was not evidence of a direct kind. He said that this statement suggests that there was evidence of a direct kind, which is not true. According to him, all evidence is subjectively interpreted. Therefore, literature is as valid a form of data as any other.

Basudev Chatterjee pointed out that what exactly was nationalism does not come out clearly in nationalist writings. *Swaraj* means essentially rule over oneself and had an existential as well as political aspect. According to him the political aspect on "anti-foreignism" became the touchstone, and the inward looking aspect was lost. In fact, even anti-foreignism had a schizophrenic aspect, the public discourse and that of the emotions. For example, Bose was able to talk of combining fascism and Communism as an ideal system, and at the same time subscribed to the concept of '*jagatdhatin* mass' The problem that Bankim was trying to pose was, according to him, the question of what exactly is woman once the socially acquired problems are taken care of. He felt that Tanika Sarkar had too easily assumed that nationalism as a religion had been so readily accepted. This should have been established more rigorously and with more arguments, or else it appears that had some people not introduced the element of religion into politics, the national movement would have been a radical one.

A. Murali felt that seeing the reformulation of culture only in terms of the 'mother' images appears to be one sided and also negates the

specificities of the historical (colonial) context. One must view this relation to the structuring of indegenous cultural-ideological front a within the specific historical context. He wanted to know what did tl self-articulation of women in politics and literature mean in terms o reformulation of public and private space and man-woman relations. According to him, the penetration of socialist ideas into literature and politics explains the emergence of new cultural and ideological conditions conducive for the massive participation of women in the national movement during the 1930s, i.e., transition from private space to public space however limited way it might be.

Sarkar agreed with Murali that the historical context of the emergence of 19th century literature needed to be given more emphasis.

Mihir Bhattacharya replied that Bankimchandra's novel was received with exuberant praise, and went into several editions. He clarified, answering to another question, that the novel was not a representation of women in 19th century Bengal. It was a statement of liberatory possibilities.

The session closed with remarks by K.N. Panikkar (Jawaharlal Nehru University) who pointed towards the use of literature as historical source. He argued that the reformulation of culture during the 19th century should be viewed in the context of indigenous cultural defence but not in isolation.

The Seminar ended with a talk by B.T. Ranadive, during the course of which he raised certain methodological questions. The gist of his argument was that no aspect of the national movement, could be analysed without relation to the entire spectrum of social reality and the inter-play of class forces operating at that time. He was also critical of the tendency to give too much importance to the written word of the participants in the movement. Such writings, were a reflection of the consciousness of the people at that time and this consciousness, he pointed out, was only a part of the complex reality. It had to be related to the entire historical context. Too much emphasis on these writings he felt, often leads to the acceptance of the consciousness of those who wrote, or to a one sided picture of those leading a movement or those opposing it. The international context was also very important, and no movement should be analysed or assessed without reference to it. He was critical of the way in which the communal question had been discussed without "any mention of class struggle" or the anti-imperialist context. Class struggle had played a definite role in shaping communal as well as anti-communal forces. So far as the Khilafat agitation was concerned, he said it was a stroke of strategy on Gandhi's part that he was able to bring the masses into the struggle. The Mullahs and liberals like Jinnah were opposed to it for this very reason. "It would have been idiotic for any leader not to join hands", he felt, when the choice lay between a united or a separate struggle. What needed to be questioned was the *basis* on which this unity was created by the Congress leadership. The traditional Muslim masses in the 1920s were moving towards "practical anti-imperialist anti-British action on the basis of a

traditional ideology" and the outcome at this stage was still open as to which would triumph.

Gandhi chose, however, to use tradition as the most handy weapon against the British. He defined *Swaraj* as *Ramrajya*, while Swadeshi in his speeches came to represent not only indigeneous industry, but also tradition His idea of a just society was not socialism, but something from the past. The question of finances and exchange ratios was given prominence in their campaigns only later during the 1930s. The bourgeois leadership was prepared to go against the British only so far as it was possible to do so without breaking its alliance with the feudal classes. Its anti-imperialism was limited by its committment to keep intact the old land relations and, consequently, also the old ideology. In its early stages the Muslim League was more anti-British than the Congress, but overlayed with old religious feeling. The leadership of Muslim League, however, fell increasingly into the hands of the landlords, who had no bourgeois stakes in India, and therefore, led the organisation towards separatism.

In this context, according to him, the question of class struggle, particularly the land question assumed even greater importance. The Congress leadership appealed to the Muslim peasantry, but was not able to keep it within the Congress because it compromised on the land question. For these reasons, he emphasised the responsibility for minority separatist aspirations lies mainly with the bourgeoisie leadership, as it does today when it is prepared to compromise with the reactionary elements within the minorities to prevent the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The primary problem for the left today, therefore, still is, as he underlined, the problem of building democratic consciousness.

He also emphasised the imperialist context of these divisive forces. The British had been able to successfully organise riots, the purpose of which was to alienate the Muslim masses from the united nationalist struggle. The compromising bourgeois leadership had in turn, contributed to its success.

This talk was followed by a discussion and finally a vote of thanks by one of the convenors of the Seminar.

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The report has been prepared largely on the basis of notes provided by rapporteurs Ms. Minakshi Menon, Ms. Anandhi Ms Nivedita Menon and Atlury Murali. My special thanks to Ms. Nivedita Menon and Atlury Murali for their particularly detailed notes.

Book Review

Indian Business and Nationalist Polttics 1931-39

CLAUDE MAKROWITZ : The Indigenous Capitalist Class and the Rise of the Congress Party, Cambridge University Press (1986). pp. 230,

THIS VOLUME very clearly represents a trend that tends both to misrepresent the Marxist approach to history and its positions regarding the charcter of various classes at different stages of social development and at the same time tries to use narrow empiricism and positivism, leading both to a self-contradictory analysis and to conclusions that are almost *a priori*, as a result.

Markowitz starts with the object of showing the world how the character of the Indian business class "runs contrary to Marxist or pseudo-Marxist assumptions about the industrialists forming an anti-imperialist 'national baurgeoisie' while traders, cspesially importers, being basically compradores, are expected to oppose nationalism."[1] Firstly, this sort of approach is utterly out of keeping with the Marxist understanding where the character of a class is seen as essentially depending on its relation to the means of production and varying within this framework according to the stage of development of a particular mode of production and to the correlation of classes at definite periods of the concrete development of socio-economic formations in particular. There is nothing eternal about it or about classes themselves.

As regards the role of the bourgeoisie of colonial states, the most comprehensive statement is that of the theses adopted by the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, placed by M.N. Roy with substantial additions and corrections by V.I. Lenin, in 1922. The Second Thesis, phrased in as general terms as possible, and the distilled essence of the experience of National Liberation Movements the world over, is quite different from what Markowitz puts out as the Marxist position.

It merely states: "The Communist International supports all *national revolutionary movements* against imperialism. At the same time it does not lose sight of the fact that only a consistent revolutionary line of policy based on the active support of the masses, and the unreserved break with all *advocates of imperialism in the interests of maintaining class domination*, can lead the oppressed masses to victory. *The connection between the native bourgeoisie and the feudal reactionaary elements enables the imperialists to make full use of feudal anarchy, the rivalry between various leaders and tribes, the antagonism between town and country, the struggle between the castes and national religious sects etc, for the purposes of disorganising the popular*

movement."[2] Nowhere is there an unequivocal presentation of a progressive anti-imperialist national capitalist class, but rather of one incapable of and unwilling to overthrow the reactionary precapitalist vested interests or to put up an uncompromising resistance to imperialism.

This position is made even clearer in an article written by Ajoy Ghosh, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India from 1951 to 1962, till his death. His view is relevant to our discussion even in narrow academic terms, as it was in 1936 that he became a member of the Politbureau of the CPI which is almost in the middle of the period of Markowitz' study. He quotes from the *Thesis on the Revolutionary Movement in the Colonies and the Semi-Colonies*, adopted by the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928, where it is clearly stated that the "native bourgeoisie, especially the portion reflecting the interests of native industry, supports the national movement and represents a *special vacillating compromising tendency which may be designated as national reformism...an opportunist movement subject to great vacillations, balancing between imperialism and revolution. .The native bourgeoisie, as the weaker side, again and again capitulates to imperialism. Its capitulation, however, is not final as long as the danger of class revolution on the part of the masses has not become immediate, acute and menacing.*"[3]

With regard to India, the position is very clear. At no point in this period did the Indian Marxists hold any other view than that "it is the *dual role* of the bourgeoisie as a class that alone can satisfactorily explain recent developments as well as past events."[4] Moreover, they stressed the fact that "the whole bourgeoisie is *national* in the sense that its interests as a class are not identical with imperialism but on the contrary come into conflict with it. The class as a whole wants independent capitalist development"[5] and that "compromise and struggle are not two different polices of two different sections but two aspects of the basic policy of the class a whole."[6] This position, which dominated the thinking of Marxists most definitely in the period under study, leaves no doubt that Markowitz, like Don Quixote, has taken to tilting at windmills of his own creation.

Starting from this weakness, Markotwiz then lands himself in another problem because of his empiricist-positivist approach. Basically his method is one that describes a series of states which can at best be superimposed one onto another with a vast stock of facts, some relevant and some irrelevant, as a descriptive aid to buttress the various "snapshots" of history. As such, transformations are either *a priori* or contradictory jumps from one state of affairs to another.

For example, in his critique of Indian bourgeois historians, at the conclusion of the book, he says: "A detailed study of the politics of Indian business in the 1930s does not confirm the image of a very articulate capitalist class capable of acting as a united lobby, an image which is currently being projected in the writings of some historians. Although an awareness of common interests was increasing, as shown by

the growth of an All-India organisation like the FICCI, it was difficult to translate into day to day practice. Rarely were the Indian capitalsts capable of acting in a united manner, except for a few months during the first phase of the Civil Disobedience Movement and at the time of the Indo-British Trade Agreement."[7]

That, however, is how social classes behave as opposed to conspiratorial groups which the historians he criticicss often reduce them to. Marx and Engels explain very succincty, in their philosophical work on *The German Ideology*, the dynamics of classes rather than just contradictory behavioural processes : *"The separate individuals form a class only insofar as they have to carry on a common battle against another class, otherwise they are on hostile terms with each other as competitors. On the other hand, the class in its turn achieves an independent existence over against the individuals, so that the latter find their conditions of existence predestined, and hence have their position in life and their personal development assigned to them by their class, become subsumed under it."*[8] Moreover, studying the character of a *vacillating* class in the context of a national liberation movement, it is not likely that one would find unadulterated examples of an enduring, conscious class perspective and practice, except at points where the struggle is unduly sharp.

The moments of class solidarity that he does note, however, are significant, and show him to be overstressing the disorganization of the Indian capitalist class just as the bourgeois historian he criticizes, Bipan Chandra, overestimates and glorifies its organisation.

This approach makes him underestimate the capacity of the growing national liberation movement to mobilise businessmen, both Indian and British, to toe its line, on the one hand, and the capacity of the capitalist class to influence important decisions of the national movement through its leadership on the other. For example, he descrides how, during the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1931, the Congress had succeeded in reducing the mills still under boycott to "only eight Indian mil's, generally small, as having refused to sign the pledge and being therefore on the boycott list. That list also included twenty-five foreign-controlled mills," and added that this was "an act of allegiance to the Congress and thus had a big moral impact"[9] At the same time the bourgeoisie extracted the Gandhi-Irwin pact from the Congress, which, in the words of Sir Purshotam das Thakurdas, was "a return to political sanity".[10] Then, by the "beginning of November (1932) the EICA (East India Cotton Association) leadership seems to have persuaded most of the European firms to sign a statement supporting Indian national aspirations and by the end of December the boycott was limited to one European firm".[11] This political isolation of the colonial government Markowitz describes as a state of affairs in which "the Government of India was in a strong enough position, having broken the backbone of Civil Disobedience"[12] How he comes to this conclusion when even British business had capitulated to the Congress

difficult to explain. Also this is not the only time the capitalist class, ɔth Indian and British, capitulated to the political pressure of the Congrees adership, exacting concessions in return.

In the textile strike of 1937-38 in Kanpur, during the Congress inistry led by Govind Vallabh Pant, workers had been fighting for the cognition of their Union, the *Mazdoor Sabha*, since the capitalists, both ritish and Indian, had already organised themselves as the Employers' ssociation of Northern India. The employers, however, refused to recog-se the union until "eventually they were forced to give in to Government essure, but they resented it continually."[13] Their resentment showed ielf in repeated attempts to scuttle the talks, but "the mill-owners had to ve in again, but in the course of their negotiations with the ministry they anaged to make their recognition of the *Sabha* conditional upon changes its internal constitution"[14] This was during the period when 'Congress irted a gradual transformation from a movement of agitation into a rliamentary Party and became a party of Government in July 1937 when formed ministries in most of the provinces of India" and "Indian capita-ts took advantage of this ongoing transformation to forge closer links th the nationalist party."[15]

Where Markowitz reflects a disjointed process, a dynamic dialectical w sees it as the growing coalescence between the aspirations of the pitalist class of India and the leaders of its national movement and the arpening of their contradiction with imperialism on the the one hand d the growing isolation of the colonial regime on the other. This was t accomplished without the alienation of the socialist forces in the Con-ss and the organised working class and peasantry and a closer alliance an before with the landlord class from 1937 on, as the capitalist class gan to lead the Congress more and more securely to parliamentarism, ay from its moorings in the mass movement, so necessary to maintain d develop a firm anti-imperialist stand, clearly forseen by the Commu-t International as early as 1922. Markowitz notes these facts but fails see the links between them in a systematic framework.

He is not entirely unaware of these facts. In his conclusion, he does te how imperialist policy inevitably "from 1937 onwards, with the begin-igs of new difficulties in some recently developed countries (*and not the vitable development of inter-imperialist competition and contradictions reasing the necessity of passing on the burden of exploitation on the colo-l economies* !)" as well as "The refusal to change the rupee ratio, the lingness to sacrifice large—scale, new encroachments by foreign capital some profitable fields, austerity budgets and Grigg's open hostility to lia's industrialisation and planning,"[16] all contributed to the growing entment of Indian capitalists against the colonial Government. He n notes how "the way in which the currency crisis was eventually solved nfirms that New Delhi's influence on British policy was limited. The

bow to London's diktat,"[17] *but fails to link this with the fact that this* diktat itself was part and parcel of a world-wide crisis of capitalism of which the colonial system was the weakest link. Therefore, London too had little option in the matter and each time it betrayed the hopes of either colonial bureaucrats or Indian capitalists, it did so as part and parcel of imperialist policy and not as a result of personal whims as Markowitz' method often makes it appear.

Apart from this, there is a definite pro-British bias in Markowitz' presentation of the decade of the thirties, and in this, both methodologically and politically, he turns out to be the other side of the coin of the Indian historians he correctly takes to task for glorifying and exaggerating the role of the conscious intervention of the Indian-capitalist class in guiding the national movement. In a contradictory manner, on the one hand, he admits that "If it is accepted that British enterprise was basically part of a structure of imperial exploitation, the explanation for its progressive paralysis is perhaps to be found in the growing structural dysfunctioning of the colonial system in India,"[18] On the other, he is unwilling to accept the corollary that "the reasons for the greater success of the Indian entrepreneurs in the 30s are necessarily to be found in a close relationship with a rising nationalism" on the flimsy grounds that "opportunism seems to be the term best qualifying the attitude of Indian businessmen during the decade."[19]

As a result of this narrow frame of reference and a static methodology he fails to see how, precisely because of such an opportunist leadership, the national movement was forced to compromise with foreign capital and the indigenous landlord class, to isolate itself more and more from the organised working class and peasantry, the only assurance of uncompromising anti-imperialism, and to establish a crisis—ridden bourgeois-landlord state incapable of completing the agrarian transformation necessary to establish even a full fledged bourgeois-democratic system, in sharp contrast to those national liberation movements led by worker-peasant alliances backed by all sections of the people, including the indigenous capitalist class, leading directly to the establishment of Peoples Democratic or Socialist states. Nor does he appreciate how these developments clearly point out to the truth of the proposition he refuses to accept so arbitrarily.

Unfortunately he has set out to refute the Marxist approach, a task unsuccessfully taken up much earlier by eminent men like Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and lately, Marcuse. And, not unnaturally, he too has failed to make his point against a dynamic theory of social transformation constantly being tested and refined by social practice and historic victories every day.

1. Markowitz, Claude: *Indian Business and Nationalist Politics 1931-1939* (1986) p. 75.
2. Adhikari, G : *Documents of the History of the CPI 1917-1922* Vol. I ; Thesis II (1971) pp. 548-9. *Italics ours.*
3. Ghosh, Ajoy : *The Indian Bourgeoisie* in *Ajoy Kumar Ghosh : Articles and Seeches* (1962), first published in *New Age* 12, 1955, p. 61. *Italics ours.*
4. Ghosh, Ajoy : *Op. cit* , p. 60.
5. Ghosh, Ajoy : *Op. cit.*, pp. 62-63. *Italics as original.*
6. *Ibid. Italics ours.*
7. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit.*, p. 182.
8. Marx, Karl and Engels, Frederick : *The German Ideology* (1968) : pp. 69-70. *Italics ours.*
9. Markcwitz, Claude : *Op. cit.*, p. 73.
10. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit* , p. 78.
11. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit.*, pp. 89-90.
12. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit.*, p. 91.
13. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit.*, p. 160.
14. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit* , p. 161.
15. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit* , p. 101.
16. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit.*, p. 183.
17. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit.*, p. 46.
18. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit.*, p. 62.
19. Markowitz, Claude : *Op. cit.*, p. 63.

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Editorial Note

IT IS a remarkable fact, indicative of the intellectual ambience of the country, that even on the most burning issue facing us today, namely the Punjab situation, analyses of the roots of the crisis are conspicuous by their scarcity. Perhaps this is an index of our pre-occupation with day-to-day events ; perhaps this springs from an aversion to "sticking one's neck out" ; or may be this is merely symptomatic of a reluctance to let semi-formed thoughts, swapped in small circles, get crystallised into publishable matter. But the fact remains that discussions on the Punjab situation, even among Marxist intellectuals, rarely reach a level of discourse different from that of the daily press. We are happy in this context to be publishing as the lead article of the current number of *Social Scientist* a piece by Javeed Alam which explores the genesis of the Punjab agitation within a framework of political economy.

The Green Revolution, the author argues, has now reached a stage where returns on any further investment of capital in agriculture are low and unattractive. At the same time, owing to the Green Revolution a considerable amount of money capital has come into the hands of the landed gentry which happens to be largely Sikh. The capital cannot find an adequate outlet in the form of *extension* of agricultural operations owing to the existence of land ceilings and other obvious constraints upon the alienation of land from the poor. On the other hand its spilling over into the sphere of industry is prevented by the operation of the pan-Indian monopoly bourgeoisie, which is unwilling to yield a fraction of the economic space it occupies and which is backed by the increasingly centralised State power. Thus the bourgeois aspirations of the Sikh landed gentry are thwarted by the big bourgeoisie, and even the local Hindu bourgeoisie which happens to have captured even such limited economic space as is available to local capital. Frustrated bourgeois aspirations in this situation have taken on a communal colouring. This process of communalisation has also been helped by the fact that in the context of the other consequences of the Green Revolution, namely a growing differentiation and polarisation within the peasantry, the Akali leadership has been resorting to appeals to religious sentiments in order to keep the entire community united behind itself and to push the contradictions of the agrarian economy into the background. Communal politics moreover has an easy appeal to the large body of unemployed educated youth ; and communal identity has got strengthened as a backlash against the very

prosperous state in the country being rocked by an explosive agitation which complains of "discrimination" and "oppression". In a situation of uneven regional development spawned by a constrained capitalism, discontent leading to chauvinism can thus appear at both ends of the regional spectrum.

Abhijit Sen's paper is concerned precisely with the nature of the Macro-constraint upon capitalist development. It argues cogently that the constraint must be located in the low rate of overall agricultural growth; the existence of large foodgrain stocks does not imply a lifting of the constraint arising from the agricultural sector. It also provides a stylised account, which is useful in itself, of the evolution of the economy and of economic policy in different periods to buttress its argument. Of special interest is his analysis of economic trends since 1970 71 where he forcefully rebuts the Planning Commission's claims about the declining incidence of poverty, and provides data to show that between 1960-71 and 1983-84 there has been a decline in real per capita agricultural incomes as well as a rise in the share of rent and interest within agricultural incomes. While the share of wages has declined in all sectors, those employed in the organised sector have witnessed an absolute improvement in living standards; in fact, all groups other than rentiers, profit-earners and the organised sector employed have had declining per capita real incomes over the last decade or so. The increase in the savings rate as well as the virtual stagnation in per capita foodgrain consumption are both reflective of the increase in income inequality over the period.

Tirthankar Roy's paper complements that of Sen. While confirming Sen's findings on real wage movements, which have a lot to do with changes in the terms of trade between agriculture and industry, the author underscores the regional variations in these movements which hnve serious implications for the future of our society and polity. Since the precise contours of economic evaluation of a society, even like ours, change through time, concrete studies of prevailing situations assume paramount importance. We hope that these three papers which between them throw considerable light on the political economy of India's development in the more recent period would be found interesting and stimulating by the readers.

*JAVEED ALAM**

Political Implications of Economic Contradictions in Punjab

Introduction

THIS PAPER is yet another attempt at understanding the Punjab problem with its various differentiated facets. The argument proceeds on a somewhat altered focus. It will try to locate the long term underlying objectively grounded roots of discontent among the classes that have gained the most in a situation of growing prosperity. This is predicated on the view that in situations of lopsided, stunted growth under retarded capitalism, deprivation or exploitation is not the only point of cumulation of discontent. The clue to the specificity of the communalisation of politics in Punjab, as against its earlier community-centredness, lies in this peculiarity. The changing contours of political articulation of discontent, during the recent past, among the exploited classes due to growing economic contradictions is itself a social consequence of this peculiarity. This obviously necessitates looking at the totality of development in a different light to grasp the determinations of economic transformation and class formation for ethnicity of communal consciousness.

Within this perspective, as a non-expert on Punjab, I find very few comprehensive analyses of the problem. There are either detailed works spelling out the growing contradictions of the economy in Punjab, especially of the Green Revolution; or, there are long accounts of the evolution of Sikh politics and the contemporary movements among the Sikhs[1].

Both types of accounts are basically of a reductionist nature although full of very useful insights. The first does not answer why contradictions of the same kind in other regions have not led to similar conflagarations and the second has a tendency to reduce every thing to history. I find on the whole that inadequate efforts have been made at explicating the social implications of the economic contradictions in the sphere of politics. The mediations from contradictions to postures seems to me to be missing.

My problem, therefore, is not simply to explain the Khalistan movement or Akali sectarianism or Sikh communalism per se but to try to disentangle the various strands in the situation, not necessarily confined to

Punjab which have created the deep discontent and given it a specific form among the Sikhs. It is the specificity of this discontent that provides the breeding ground for all the various disruptive movements in Punjab backed by imperialism and its underlings which are worrying us all so much. It is important to understand the Punjab situation also because nothing else has been as instrumental in communalising the social perceptions and political understanding of the people in India, especially in the northern regions quite apart from giving rise to the most gruesome killings and massacre of a community. Communalisation of political understanding is in fact creating hierarchies of treason that people are beginning to associate with different communities living in India. This in itself is a symptom of Hindu communalism acquiring a crystallised shape and militant postures. The aggressiveness of Hindu communalism in turn is reinforcing the communalism of other religious communities including that of the Sikhs.

The Context and Crisis

From the mid-sixties, after the creation of the Punjabi Suba, to the early seventies, the problem in Punjab was *non-specific* in one fundamental sense. It was *more* a demand for greater autonomy to states like in Tamil Nadu or West Bengal or as it is now in Andhra Pradesh. But in this, as an aside, the way the Akalis posed the problem, there was a communal current which links up with the way the different Akali factions are contending now. The distinct shift in its character occurs from around the late 1970s and early 1980s. Its *specificity* now lies in the slow *merging* of state autonomy demands for Punjab with the aggravation of the crisis of Sikh identity and the manifestation of these in the shape of a distorted nationality consciousness based on chauvinistic communalism and extreme sectarian violence.

If the problem represents such a transition then an account based only on the developments internal to Punjab society will not be revealing. We may rather have to account for the interactions between the changing configuration of organised forms state power in India and the maturing of contradictions in the economy and their implications specific to the regional society of Punjab. This, I consider, will be a fruitful line of inquiry to understand the persistence of the problem in its present form in Punjab.

Before going into the analysis of the Punjab problem it may perhaps be useful to briefly digress to clarify a few aspects of state power in India. State power in India represents an internally shifting balance arising out of, on the one hand, the mutual dependence and the accords and understanding among the more important sections of the pan-Indian ruling classes like the big bourgeoisie and the landlords and, on the other, contradictions, conflicts and bargaining among them; the landlords can be a potentially divisive force and can whip up pre-modern sentiments when

dentical with its *nature*. These have more to do with tendencies leading to he centralization of state power and its concentration in certain organs of government. These tendencies are more crucial in conditioning and tructuring the responses of the various regions as well as the various classes and social forces within those regions.

The process of structuring of the responses is something distinct from he generation and cumulation of mass discontent which is due more to he modes of exploitation and social oppression in various regions within, of course, the relative success or failure of a given path of development in a society like India. Centralisation of political power and the consequent choking of certain processes of politics has been a key factor in the aggravation of Punjab crisis and the rapid shift in its articulation towards violent communal chauvinism. The initial bases of deflection in the mode of articulation of the regional problem in Punjab has been the efforts of he centralised state power in India to subvert the more democratic endencies and political movements in Punjab. In fact, this has been a eature of politics in the country as a whole. The steady erosion of democratic institutions and processes and the slow undermining of the nstitutionalised linkages between different layers of politics at various evels of society has been the result of more than anything else, the same orces that pushed Indian politics towards greater and greater centralisation. Together these have strengthened authoritarian tendencies in the politics.[2] Locating the problem in these macro forces is also important to disabuse ourselves of the notion that there is anything intrinsic in the consciousness of Sikhs as a major conditioning factor. This observation does not in any way imply that there is nothing specific about the religious collectivity called the Sikhs. It simply means that consciousness and its political articulation is a much more complex phenomenon and is not of an nvariant nature.

To come back to the organised form of state power in India centralisation is inherent in the capitalist path of development but it becomes more aggressive in the multi-national Third World countries due to : (a) sharpening of regional-national aspirations in the face of varying fluctuations of the prosperity of the regions and more so of the ruling classes within regions like Punjab; and (b) the evolution of the party structure in n environment of *inelasticity of concessions* in the inter-regional and regional vs. pan-Indian distribution of the *surplus* within the ruling classes. The Akalis, as the political representatives of the landlords and rich peasants who in Punjab are also the rising bourgeoisie among the Sikhs,[3] re acutely affected by the sharpening of aspirations and the inelasticity f concessions.

Once this is seen, the regional dimension of the all-India political rocess can be seen more elaborately, not only in Punjab but also in Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu or Karnataka and so on. In this situation,

based claimants of *extra-surplus*, the state also uses the pan-Indian nati nalist slogan to brow-beat the regions. The most blatant use of tl nationalist slogans by the ruling Congress party was the manner in whic the Punjab issue was used during the December 1984 parliamentary ele tions. The one continuous refrain of the Prime Minister was to equat the entire Sikh politics as secessionist; all the more pernicious because th fear was played upon in the wake of Mrs. Gandhi's murder and the larg scale massacre of innocent Sikhs. The entire opposition was also dubbe as colluding with the secessionist Sikh politics. In fact, playing upo this theme was itself a continuation of the ruling party's efforts to eras the distinction between the extremists and others in the Sikh politics b a machiavellian use of the crisis in Punjab society. By giving a nationalisti twist, this tactic was useful in gathering the growing Hindu backlash i favour of the Congress.[4] Such tactics complicate the problem, includin its communalisation given the specificities of Punjab and in a general wa creates the political space for imperialist manipulations.

The problem in Punjab as it has crystallised is neither a case o communalism of a simple sort nor one of regionalism in a straightforwarc sense. It represents much more a tangled and twisted intersection of both these currents. In its latest manifestation it is a forced coming together of these strands conditioned as much by party political manipulations as by the nature and organised forms of state power in India.

Regional movements in India have generally been understood in terms of regional unevenness of modern economic developments. Given the distinct linguistic-cultural character of the various regions, the regional assertion has also assumed varying dimensions of the national question in India. In the case of Punjab the known formulations seem inadequate for two reasons. First, unlike in Andhra or Tamil Nadu earlier or West Bengal, the demand for state autonomy had remained more or less confined to one particular group, those Sikhs who supported the Akalis. Hindus in general have been either satisfied with the way things are or have been openly hostile even to the secular demands raised by the Akalis. Secondly, the regional-cum-state autonomy issue in Punjab was not due to Punjab lagging behind in terms of regional unevenness as such or Punjab slipping behind other states over time as is the case with West Bengal. That is why looking at regionalism as a struggle due to slow or uncertain development is only partially true and a simplistic explanation. What has to be gone into for an explanation of such movements is the totality of development and the gaps within it. But a mode of explanation predicated on lag factors has been so widely and uncritically accepted that it has caused baffled responses even among the politically informed when a region like Punjab or a community within it such as Sikhs enjoying such an advantageous position gets in the forefront of raising such demands.

It is a well known fact that Punjab is the richest state in India with ... growth rate which has been well above

he all India averge. This remains so if we look at the proportion of erenially irrigated land, tractors per 100,000 hectares of land, fertilizer onsumption, electrification, etc. All this prosperity is accounted for by n unprecedented growth within agriculture. Towards this, a major ontribution has been made by massive public investments. In fact, for long time even before Independence, Punjab h d received a disproporionately high percentage of state investment in the creation of irrigation acilities and other fixed capital assets.[5]

Discriminations against Punjab by the Centre as a unqualified ssertion is therefore hard to sustain. This would remain so even though has lagged way behind in industrial development as compared to many ther states. The *Annual Survey of Industries* data show that it does not gure among the top industrial states of India.[6]

However, given these facts, the rulers in India have succeeded in enerating a strong and widespread feeling in the country, especially so in orthern India, about the Sikhs in general as an irrational, sectarian and loody minded people; a feeling about the entire community as extreme ommunalists out to destroy the fabric of Indian unity. The latter day actics of marauding armed Sikh fanatics owing allegiance to Bhindranwale nd the ineffectiveness of the Akalis to effectively combat these or of ections of Akalis succumbing to extremist pressure has also come in handy or the national leadership to muddle popular understanding of the roblem.

Causalities and Manifestations

The transformation of the political conflicts in Punjab into a comlicated and dangerous communal tangle is tied up with two distinct ypes of causal factors and the interaction of their consequences. First, e green revolution in Punjab has given rise to a range of social and olitical implications, as distinct from economic contradiction, and secondly, e entangling of these implications with the increasing centralisation of ate power in India. Interestingly, the abnormally rapid pace of centrlisation of state power in India under Mrs. Gandhi[7] coincides with the eginning of the consolidation of the results of the Green Revolution in unjab and also the formation of the Sikh majority Punjab state a little arlier.

Out of this, three distinct layers of discontent and potential conflicts ormed within the Sikh community in general but each one of which has een more pronounced within certain classes or strata. In the making of e present crisis all of them coalesced. To enumerate only at this point, rst, there was the slow development and jelling of bourgeois aspiration mong the landlords and the upper stratum of the rich peasants—an urge grow and expand continuously. Such is generally the case with all earers of capital, more so productive capital. Secondly, the maturing of ontradictions between the landlords and rich peasants on the one side and

the poor peasants and agricultural labourers among Sikhs on the other and the efforts of the dominant Akali leadership to control the political consequences of these for their domination. Thirdly, a dislocation and weakening of the unifying basis of religious ideology and its hold over the Sikh masses particularly those belonging to the younger generation in urban areas.

Due to the excessive centralisation of state power and the choking of political processes and economic decision making, none of these layers of discontent and potential conflict could work themselves out within the sphere of state politics. Instead they got tied up as a problem for which the centre was held responsible.

The bourgeois aspiration is a natural outcome of the relatively thorough going capitalisation of agriculture in Punjab. This has given rise to a relatively large accumulation of capital in the hands of landed gentry which is largely Sikh. Capital in whichever hands cannot remain static. It is a truism that it must grow and continuously expand. Whatever comes in the way of the potential expansion of capital has either to be swept away or the bearer of capital comes into different degrees of conflict with forces seen to be obstructing its growth.

In the case of modern industry, however pronounced the overall stagnation of the Indian economy, the big capital has continued to grow. The case of big commercial capital in trade and commerce or in the sphere of circulation in general has not been too different either. The bearers of big capital in industry and trade have therefore less of a reason to be discontented.

The same cannot be said of the capital in agriculture in Punjab or elsewhere. It could have grown as in industry in one of the two ways under conditions of unrestrained capitalist growth. The first route could have been the unhindered expansion of the capitalist enterprise of entrepreneurs in agriculture as it had happened in U.K. or Russia. This would have meant a continuous expansion in the size of holdings of the more enterprising farmers and the consequent collapse of the differentiations among the peasantry along the poles of landlords and agricultural labourers. This route has however been foreclosed in India by the land ceiling legislations and other land reform measures for the protection of small holders and tenants and also by the efforts of the democratic movement especially the left streams within it to fight and curb the power of landlordism and to protect the vulnerable sections of the peasantry. The success of certain individual capitalist farmers to break through the obstacles imposed by law or popular movements does not however invalidate the above point. For the class as such the option of continuous expansion in the scale of operations of the capitalist farmers has become historically a closed one. Alternatively, the large-scale and massive entry of the surplus agricultural capital into the spheres of industry or trade and

of industrialisation in general (but conditioned as much in Punjab by the historical "disjunction"[8] between agricultural and industrial development) did not allow for such an eventuality, except perhaps in a small way in regions like what is now Tamil Nadu or Andhra Pradesh. In Punjab in particular the non-availability of openings for the expansion of the capital formed in agriculture has had far reaching consequences for the activation of certain elements of the inherited social cleavages.

To get to the repurcussions of this, it may be useful to pause briefly and take note of certain features of the modern manufacturing sector in Punjab. This will highlight one contradiction of the developing capitalism in Punjab's agricultural economy. Development of capitalism in agriculture pre-supposes the overall development of capitalism. Full development of agriculture on lines of growing capitalist enterprise requires, apart from technological leaps, extended reproduction, real subsumption of labour and absorption of labour power released from agriculture. Otherwise there can be a persistence of and reversion to semi-feudal relations in production and social practices associated with this. We will see later how the growing aspirations among the various classes can get deflected and distorted into channels that represent the most disruptive and divisive aspects of pre-capitalist ideologies based on caste or religious communities.

For the purposes of this argument, three aspects of the modern manufacturing sector in Punjab stand out as of striking importance. First, there is an overwhelming preponderance of small industries in Punjab without much of product diversification. This remains so in spite of the fact that the sphere of large and medium industry has increased slowly from 38.25 per cent in the early 1970s to 48.56 per cent by early 1980's[9] in the total volume of industrial production. This small industry producing mainly woollen textiles, hosiery, cycles and cycle parts, (small) agricultural implements, some machine tools, steel re-rolling and sport goods is also largely concentrated in Ludhiana, Jullunder and Amritsar, that is, of a total of 42,000 units in 1980, 67 7 per cent were concentrated in these districts providing 73.6 per cent of the employment in this sector.[10] Moreover the share of these industries has been going up in the total value added by the small scale sector; up from 78 per cent to 91 per cent between 1973-74 to 1979-80.[11]

Secondly, industries that have grown relatively rapidly are largely made up of those that depend for the supply of raw-material from outside the state and the demand as well for the bulk of their products is also from outside the state. Let us for example take tractors—most intensively used in Punjab[12]—which are made outside Punjab but a number of accessories like ball-bearings, etc., are made in Punjab and sold to firms outside; or, take steel castings an input imported from outside but steel ingots, a product, is mostly sold outside. Taking Punjab's pattern of consumption local ... in food and woollens

textiles. Everything else Punjab gets from the rest of the country or abroad. In short, both the backward linkages (supply side) and forward linkages (demand side) are very weak in the industrial structure of Punjab.

In the traditionally industrialised states like Maharashtra or Bengal and also Gujarat to a large extent, these linkages are much more localised. The same is the care in the states which industrialised rapidly in the post-independence phase like Andhra Pradesh or Karnataka. Perfect autonomisation or localisation of production is never possible in a single economy but more and more intensification of localisation is both possible and has taken place in may regions of India.

Thirdly, curiously those industries based on processing agricultural raw material are very few in Punjab although the availability of many such inputs is in abundance; viz., sugar, oil seeds, long-staple cotton, etc. In fact, sugarcane production has shown a long-term downward trend[13] because of the lack of milling capacity as sugarcane cannot be easily procured over long distances as cotton or oil-seeds can be.

Finally, over and above everything else, one significant feature of Punjab economy seems to be the low labour productivity in the modern manufacturing sector. It has been calculated to be only 77 per cent of productivity in agriculture as against 225 per cent in India as a whole.[14]

Along with the historically inherited disjunction between industry and agriculture noted above, one important reason for the lop-sided development of industry in Punjab seems to be the nature of the "industrial licensing system" controlled by the big bourgeoisie, an aspect of the centralisation of state power in India under its leadership. Taking note of this aspect is not arguing for de-regulated industrial licensing but against its regional bias; for example, one can ask; why does not the Indian government give the Haldia petro-chemical complex to West Bengal? Similarly, but in a different vein, now that the government is trying to have big industry in Punjab it is doing so under the non-Punjabi bourgeoisie. Any combination of a few Punjabis could,perhaps, float the capital if the centrally controlled financial institutions could guarantee their ventures by financial participation; if this happens even the share market may respond favourably to raise capital. The sprinkling of up-and-coming Punjabi bourgeoisie is potentially capable of growing big in industry but it is not becoming so.

In the face of the centralisation argument, the upshot of all this is that Punjab lags behind in industrialisation and Punjabi bourgeoisie lags further behind. Even at the level of trade and marketing of food-grains and more so in the case of cotton, the pan-Indian trading-merchant capital gets a red carpet treatment in Punjab; often by design the Cotton Corporation of India is beaten by traders from Kanpur in reaching the market.

While in the case of agriculture the Indian state went all out to

and patronage, when it comes to industry the state does not or cannot support local bourgeoisie at the cost of monopoly or pan-Indian bourgeoisie.

Within this limited economic space, further restricted by the stagnant national economy, monopolistic networks, (not necessarily monopolies in the technical sense) in trade and commerce or industry have a decided advantage. Within this space, the regional non-big Hindu bourgeoisie enjoys a distinct pre-eminence by the fact of near complete control of trade and commerce and industry. With the growing availability of money-capital among the capitalist farmers and the consequent rise of bourgeois aspirations, the competition within the non-big bourgeoisie gets sharper. Given its control of the monopolistic net-works in the context of limited economic opportunities, the Hindu non-big bourgeoisie gets the better of the situation with the result that the entry of the new aspirants gets blocked. In a situation of unlimited growth opportunities, it may be possible to break the hold of such monopolistic networks strengthened in the Indian situation by their family and caste linkages. Due to the communalised nature of economic opportunities,[15] the contradictions of the Hindu non-big bourgeoisie with the pan-Indian monopoly capital does not become political ; in other words, this non-big section of the bourgeoisie goes on supporting the monopoly bourgeoisie which controls the Indian state.

It is important to point out here even if as a digression that all this divides the potential of the democratic movement. The monopoly bourgeoisie gains out of it and the bourgeois-landlord state tries to manipulate the situation to gain short term political advantages as it has always tried to up to the very recent times. And by the different modes of interventions that such a situation provides, imperialism also gains a foothold. The non-congruence in this situation arises out of the fact that whereas the bourgeois state tactically strengthens itself by dividing the people and deflecting their discontent and thus disrupting the democratic movement, the growing manipulative flexibility of imperialism and its underlings like the military rulers of Pakistan weaken the basis of the bourgeois state. The dilemmas—the vacillations and nervousness—of the national political leadership in charge of the state in a such a situation generate a peculiar indecisiveness to act with clarity and purpose. Those times have gone by when the ruling classes could play up the divisive cards to weaken the democratic movements and then hope to contain such forces of disruption in coalitional accommodations or through simple cooption. The deepening crisis and its concomitant discontents has weakened the ability of the state to go in for such manoeuvres and hence increased the dangers to national unity manifold ; they can be devoured by the frankenstein.

The bourgeois aspirations among the Sikh rural gentry have come into clash with the bourgeois hegemony of Hindu traders, merchants and industr...

established hegemony. Unfortunately also the aspirations are located within the capitalist classes belonging to one religious community and the hegemony as such belongs to elements within another religious community. Given the restrictive practices of established groups and their monopolistic control of limited possibilities, there is no easy avenue for the satisfaction of growing bourgeois aspirations among the rich rural Sikhs. The nature of the urban economy in Punjab with its various monopolistic control, as noted above, is such that it has not permitted the entry of Sikhs in a big way. There is quite some evidence that money capital is accumulating with the capitalist farmers but we know little about what is happening to it.[16] Even the Bhappa Sikhs—the urban business "caste" among the Sikhs—who control some of the business and trade in Punjab feel their growth frustrated by the commercial hegemony of the Hindu business castes. As an aside, this blockage of aspirations has created the basis of political complementarity between them and the landed gentry in spite of objective contradictions. It is therefore doubly difficult for the Jat Sikh capitalist farmers to move into these fields in a big way. In another state, e g., Andhra, where both the emergent capitalist farmers and traders or merchants and industrialists are Hindus, the clash between these two forms of capital has remained a straight-forward economic one. In Punjab, on the contrary, the contradiction between the merchant capital and the productive capital in agriculture has strong communal overtones. This clash between the bourgeois aspiration of an emergent class from among the Sikh landed gentry and the bourgeois hegemony of the established class groups from among the business castes has been an important source of simmering discontent within the rural gentry and it is to this section that the modern leadership, as against the ones prior to or immediately before independence, of the Akalis belongs.

The matter is complicated when this layer of conflict and discontent combines with other more straight forward economic contradictions which have become intrinsic to the very developments of the green revolution. Studies have shown that differentiations within the peasantry in Punjab are increasing more sharply than in many other regions in India.[17] There is also the tendency of a relative collapse of peasant classes towards the class extremes and its working out is only partially arrested by recruitments in army and migration abroad. This has serious consequences for the political hold of the Akalis on the Sikh masses.

Over 1961-71 and 1971-81 the increase in the number of agricultural labourers is phenomenal.[18] If we leave out migrant labour, a little over a third of the total, most of the agricultural labourers are known as Mazhabi Sikhs. While the Mazhabis are essentially labourers, they are not necessarily landless. A very large proportion of them are peasants—classified in government documents as marginal and poor. Therefore demands relating to agriculture are also important for this section of Sikhs traditionally hostile to the Akalis

The need to keep the peasantry politically unified is therefore important for the Akalis along with keeping the support of other Sikhs With the intensification of the crisis in Punjab, one can discern a subtle change in emphasis from demands relating to fertilizers and price-subsidy to canal water. Canal water happens to be one cheap input almost equally useful for all sections of the peasantry including poor peasants as well as the landlords. It is therefore the only one economic slogan on which the entire peasantry can be united ; it can also be tactically useful for the bourgeois leadership in pushing the wage demands into the background But it is interesting to note how even such simple democratic demands get communalised in the prevailing surcharged atmosphere in Punjab and the Akalis have also not been able to resist their communalisation. Let us look at the case of electricity and the demand for its assured supply to the agricultural sector. With the green revolution the demand for electricity has grown phenomenally within the agricultural sector. The share of agricultural demand on the total availability of electricity has gone up from 6.45 per cent in 1967 68 to 38.0 per cent by 1970 71 and further to 44 per cent by 1980-81 with the result that the shortage of electric power has become serious ; shortage now is approximately 2500 plus HKwh.[19] This has obviously necessitated rationing and "rational" distribution between agriculture and industry. Whenever there is a more than normal cut back on supply to agriculture, the cry is heard that it is to favour the "Hindu-bania" industrialist or when the rationing gets a bit severe for industry especially during sowing and harvesting periods the industrialist would grumble that the state pampers the Sikhs because of their agitational tactics. None of the democratic demands have remained free of such communal twists ; the communalisation of the language issue by the Hindus is too well known to need recounting here.[20] It is here that the left has not been successful in intervening decisively in the situation. As far as the present crisis is concerned it may be partly also because, in the early 1980s, the left, perhaps, overestimated the democratic potential of the Akalis.

The dominant leadership has also created a great deal of sectarian ambiguity about migrant labour vs. local labour as the class needs of different peasant groups concerning migrant labour are not necessarily compatible.[21] It has therefore been useful to play it up as a question of Hindus vs. Sikhs and demand disenfranchisement of migrant labourers rather than allow it to emerge as a wage question. Along with these, there has also been a growing recourse in a rhetorical way to religious demands although there is a noticeable gap, and this needs to be carefully noted to discern the class nature of Akali politics, between the issues being negotiated and slogans used to mobilise the people. Given the religious and caste composition of the peasantry, the slogan of Sikh political rights acquires a political potency. Appeals to the religious sentiments of the people come in handy for the leaders to unif[illegible]

as it simultaneously helps them to push the agrarian contradictions within the peasantry into the backgroundas of lesser significance in the subjective consciousness of the people. Two trends in Punjab society strengthen the appeal of religious slogans. One of these is economic in nature and the other more of a sociological character.

The working out of the logic of Green Revolution has now reached a point where returns on further additional investments of capital are slowing down. Evidence shows that capital deepening has been much faster than productivity growth and the difference between the two has been the highest in Punjab.[22] This has obvious implications for the different sections of the peasantry in Punjab. In the earlier phases of the Green Revolultion all sections of the peasantry gained out of the new agricultural technology although very differentially. But it is now becoming more and more difficult even for the better off peasants to profitably invest additional amount of capital required to maintain or increase the level of agricultural productivity. The plight of the poor peasants has been decidedly worse and has been discussed already.[23]

Along with this swelling of the ranks of poor peasants, their growing mpoverishment growth in the number of agricultural labourers together with brutal forms of semi-feudal exploitation of migrant labour in the recent period another devastating development in Punjab society has been the contraction in employment opportunities. It has been reported that figures in the category of educated unemployed are higher in Punjab than the All-India average.[24] Also the magnitude of unemployment among the educated works out to be higher than among the labour force in general. This has not been without consequences both in the political articulation of the generalised discontent as well as the ease with which the extremists, have created an appeal among certain sections of the population.

Precisely because of this, two interrelated issues have been raised in an either-or manner. There has been a noticeable and increasing demand for free-trade in agricultural products,[25] even among the middle peasants. If the American wheat sells all over why cannot ours, such seems to be the refrain. If you cannot grant us free-trade then give us higher subsidies.

Here we find an interesting analogy with the big bourgeoisie. The big bourgeoisie after accepting the dominant role of the public sector now wants greater freedom. What it wants for itself, the big bourgeoisie cannot give to the other partners in the ruling class alliance. This analogy also highlights the contradiction between monopoly capital in industry and capital in agriculture. what it wants for itself, the big bourgeoisie cannot give to agricultural capitalists because wage-good prices, etc., come in and thus involve the question of working classes and salaried strata. Therefore the same demand—optimum return on capital—when it emantes from two diffirent sources, the monopoly capitalists and the agricultural landlords, cannot be simultaneously fulfilled for both. In a certain way this is the

things, to manage the political fall-out of this contradiction, centralised state power appears necessary. Regional responses, given the specificities, vary form one region to another.

The peasantry in Punjab being what it is, it is not difficult for the dominant section among the peasantry to combine the economic demands with slogans about religious rights. We therefore have the paradoxical phenomenon when the most modern demands of the peasantry like cheaper electric power for irrigation or low input prices and high output prices have gone hand in hand with the obscurantist slogans of religious privileges for Sikhs. In Andhra, the Telegu Desam has remained an all people's movement. The Amra Bengali movement in West Bengal has not made any impact. Each situation has been determined by a wide range of factors including the history and strength of the democratic movement. But in this history itself, as also in the present situation, the differential nature of the development of the economy of a region and its impact on the position of different communities has contributed towards the emergence of a relatively distinct sociology of protests and mobilization within the region.

The rapidity and pervasiveness of economic transformation and high rates of migrations of Sikhs in Punjab have contributed to the contrary tendency of the weakening of the hold of religious observances, considered to be very important for Sikh identity. Revivalist movements always attempt to build fortresses against such disruptive influences of modernity. In a curiously understandable way both modernity and lumpenisation or aimless hedonism get equated as being identical. The importance of physical appearance for communal identity among the Sikhs and the significance of this appearance as the symbol of the protest embodied in the Sikh religion and its fighting past history have a great deal to do in this collapse and conflation of identity and physical appearance. In Punjab this too became an important layer of discontent among sections of the community. Fundamentalist preachers—as Bhindranwale was to begin with step into this space and try to re-establish the pristine purity of the community. These revivalist appeals in such situations also try to play up the religious undertones in the political situation. Bhindranwale, before he was catapulted into political prominence to subvert the Akali movement and to disrupt the growing Sikh identification with issues of state autonomy, represented this layer of discontent. There has however been a serious flaw in the way the Akalis have posed the problem of state autonomy[26]. Even when they raise the most democratic demands, they do so in the name of the Sikhs and the discriminations against the Sikhs rather than in the name of Punjab or peasantry as such, as the other state autonomy movements have been doing. The Panth in danger, even when the river water issue is involved is not an unusual cry. The "theo-political"[27] overtones have become a source of serious doubts about the democratic credentials of the Akalis' and been partly responsible for keeping democratic minded Hindus away fromtheir agitations. The same limitations marked the way the Akali Dal tried to fight

fundamentalism of the sort represented by Bhindranwale or the demand for Khalistan. The harping on religion and religious demands, the communalised presentation of democratic demands, the theo-political ideological postures strengthened the ideological basis of fundamentalism. Such a mode of articulation reinforces the role of religion in politics and thereby weakens the democratic-secular basis of struggle for popular demands. In this merging of secular-democratic demands with claims of religious privilege, the continuing links and dependence of Akali Dal on Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) has been a crucial conditioning factor. It has by now been so well-researched that it needs no reiteration in details to say that the Akali Dal depends both for its organisational muscle and financial strength on the SGPC. The Jathedar remains a key figure at the grass-root level in uniting the two organisations however clear may be the functional separation at the different higher levels of their working[28]. Such a politics and the ethos it creates is always conducive to revivalist appeals or fundamentalist postures especially when generalised discontent deepens, as has been the case in Punjab. This together with the machiavellian use by the ruling party of factional differences in Punjab politics[29] has helped in the rapid enlargement of the role of fundamentalists which is analogous to that of the "Ayatollahs" but has little to do with anything intrinsic to the Sikh community.

Centralised state power with its dictatorial tendencies and manipulative inclinations changed the very direction of causal chains emanating from economic and social contradictions within Punjab. None of these contradictions could work out within the sphere of state politics. It is possible to conjecture that given a much greater degree of power with states for effective policy formulation, economic decision making and resource mobilization issues like declining profit with the working out of the logic of Green Revolution need not have become a problem involving centre-state relations. Or, the contradictions among the peasantry could not have been deflected so easily away from state politics as an issue involving discrimination against the Sikhs by the centre. It is conceivable that the different layers of discontent may not have necessarily coalesced and would have remained as parallel layers within the state poltics. Their coming together has been the cause of the problem assuming the shape of distorted nationality demands of a communal chauvinistic nature. It is therefore important to distinguish between manifestations and causalities in understanding crisis situations.

In much of the existing analysis these distinctions have not been drawn and the manifestations and causalities have been collapsed togther simply as "factors" in the making of the crisis.

It has become the unfortunate fate of the left movement in situations of retarted capitalism in multi-national situations, that it has to concentrate on fighting the manifestations. The causalities are built into the laws of

ı—the source—from which these causalities emanate. It is exactly ıat makes the destiny of the national unity tied up with fighting and ›ming these manifestations.

;ciousness and Postures

Iany readers may wonder about the fact that I have not said anything the historical evolution of Sikh politics, which over the years has n important area of inquiry. This has been deliberate I strongly at most of the past history of Sikhs is not very relevant in underng the contemporary crisis in Punjab.[30] It seems to me that the ıt history in understanding Punjab today is of the recent making. quite aware of the very important role of Singh Sabha movement 1880 cnwards to the Gurdwara movement in 1920s in the formation ;epening of Sikh identity. For the sake of argument in this paper, ing about the problem of *identity* on the level of social collectivities be made clear: I strongly believe that periods that become unsettled 'or communities push questions of identity to the forefront. The ged impact of the British rule resulted in the disintegration of the al life processes of society and internal dislocation of religious belief s. This led also to a breakdown of the unity of secular and religious ; of life of the people—a unity so important for most of the religions a, as they did not have any dictum like "render unto God what is ınd unto Ceasar what is Ceasar's." The existing doctrinal systems ,ious thought could not provide answers to the needs and urges of ople and the qualitatively new problems posed by these unsettled The inability of the then existing doctrinal systems to unify and give g to the experiences or urges of the people resulted in a sense of sness and spiritual vacuum. All this called forth a search for new ;. The obsessive concern with questions of identity was in part an c of this, in the form of both reform and revival movements; in fact, sm and reform often got fused together helping the British to play vide-and-rule game.

/hat was happening among the Sikhs during this period was nothing ecific.[31] Similar movements of revival were taking place among all ıs communities—Hindus and Muslims—leading to parallel trends of sm and communal exclusiveness along with growing participation the national movement.[32] Out of the multiple traditions and ; of different communities rival claims were being made on the usness of ordinary people by different sets of leaders or the same at different points in time depending on the issues on which they to mobilise people or to disrupt alternative mobilisations. It is ınt to remind ourselves of this development because of the general ;y of a great deal of academic analysis to reach out for al roots of crisis situations. This is often done in isolation from

on history. What was happening during that phase of our national history was an effort at a new self-definition on the part of the various religious communities; Sikhs were not alone in that quest. The period of the Singh Sabha movement is also the period of Dayanand—Arya Samaj, Vivekanand—Rama Krishna Mission, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan—Aligarh movement and so on. To single out Sikhs and the Singh Sabha or Gurdawara movement as the determinant of the present crisis is historically myopic, just as to point to these other developments in our society is in no way a defence of the extremist trend among the Sikhs. The terrain of discourse in all these movements at re-definition involved questions both of theology and identity. But given the pervasiveness of the unifying influences at the popular level of the national movement and the hopes of renewal that it generated, the period was also punctuated with efforts at accommodation. The national movement itself tried to build as many coalitional bridges as were practically possible. Therefore the Gurudwara movement or the Khilafat agitation could become part of the anti-imperialist struggle and not simply a sectarian effort at self-assertion.[33]

Today what is happening in the context of deepening crisis and a sense of exasperation, in contrast to hopes of renewal, is also an effort at a re-or self-definition on the part of various religious communities. It has become a disruptive phenomenon threatening national unity because of party-political manipulations by the ruling classes, in a situation of hopelessness, to gain short term advantages. Instead of the all-peoples unity which the national movement strove for, today the ruling classes attempt to divide the people to stay in power. This narrowed perspective of the ruling classes today gives rise to confrontation instead of accommodation, disruption of people's unity instead of coalition-building—however fragile it was even at that time. It is precisely in this socio-political space of uncertainty and directionlessness among the people that imperialism steps into destabilise the situation to enhance its bargaining position; or how else can it compel you to exchange livelihood for technology, jobs for efficiency, robots and automation for shrivelled labouring hands, etc., in short, forcing India into a dependent interdependence on world capitalist economy. The mode of political activity of the ruling class leadership is not, in one important sense, very different now. Depending upon their interests at specific moments they try to captere the imagination of the masses by selectively appealing to these traditions and legacies. Blatant recent examples of allowing wrong issues to grip the minds of the people are the compromises entered into with the most irrational elements of orthodoxy in different religions. Or, how else can we understand the Muslim Women's (Protection) Bill or the handling of the situation arising out of the Ramjanmabhoomi—Babari Mosque episode ? While increasingly encouraging and compromising with the orthodox elements in different communities, the state has also tried to balance various communal forces in a ongoing unstable balance of power. If the Muslim communal opinion

iet with the Babari Mosque episode then it should be placated with ı Women's Bill.

'his type of commual politics gives rise to, as happens in riots, a ; of politics in which common people dissipate their energies and are ft to fend for themselves in healing their wounds. Obviously there-ere will be little time or energy with them to think and work to-iolutions of issues located in social needs. It is anti-emancipatory . This process is however not without its uses for the ruling when their legitimacy is in decline. It is worth pondering whether w shifts in the economic and education policies with all their iis on technocracy and managerialism could be made to go down in without the corrosive influence of divisive politics we are now ing in the country. It is precisely here that the Punjab crisis with ; repercussions across the country, especially those of creating fears prehensions, insecurity and neuroticmilitancy among the Hindus, has consequences for the country's politics. By insulating the ruling and their political representatives from the pressure of democratic ds, it has allowed them to smuggle in more and more the prescrip-f the IMF and World Bank and invite the MNCs as a panacea for nomic ills of the country. In the same way as divisive politics is o the Indian ruling classes so is the weakening and destabilisation 'or imperialism. Imperialism will therefore like to keep Punjab g since no other issue has had such a deep impact since independence ling the Indian people on communal lines. It is therefore important he Punjab issue not in isolation but in its implication for the has helped the ruling classes to re-structure power in the entire / as well as its international dimensions which benefit imperialism.

'he practical consciousness of man—consciousness reflected in his day activities and politics—can be understood in terms of memory, on and expectation. Within the subjectivity of the people they form e. The present attention of people, not the scientific historical tanding, stands as the boundary between the (active) memory or the ively relevant past and the expectation of future. Whatever becomes iade to become the object of attention generates a particular pattern iory and conditions the practical consciousness of the people.

'opular consciousness, therefore, at any particular time, is a selective subjectivity as a concrete whole is never coterminus with history. If t events and their interrelations could become objects of attention here would not be any subjectivity · consciousness would become objective. In understanding the responses of popular mind it is ore crucial to understand the determinants of "selectivity" ; in other how the present attention gets concentrated upon certain events of ' and not on other. Why do most of the political formations among iarp upon the "glorious" tradition of combating the Delhi durbar ?

late sixties or seventies. The Kooka and the Ghadar movements are as much a part of Sikh history as are those being talked about by the "extremists" and encouraged by the imperialists.

This (partially) determined nature of selectivity gives an infinite variety to history in popular notions and gives to human intervention the key role in shaping human destiny, both in the short and the long run. Bhindranwale's successful intervention to the glee of imperialists, let us hope in the short tun, and the relative failure of the others has to been seen in this perspective. Having said this about the success of extremism in causing massive disruption, I would like to emphasise one feature of the communal situation in Punjab. The two communalisms—Hindu and Sikh—are pointed in two different directions. Apart from the extremist fringe among the Sikhs, Sikh communalism is, on the one hand, directed against the Centre and, on the other, its various factions are trying to punch each other low. The Hindu communalism, in sharp contrast, is squarely directed against the Sikhs. This poses a grave threat to the future of communal amity in Punjab. Together they represent, in equal measure, the major obstacle to the emergence of a Punjabi nationality.

Conclusion

Who then wants Khalistan ? From the foregoing analysis it would seem reasonable to infer that none of the classes from within the agrarian economy would gain anything out of Khalistan. Nor would the very few substantial industrialists or traders among the Sikhs benefit in any way, they being so well integrated within the pan-Indian market We cannot be sure about the smaller but ambitious commercial or industrial bourgeoisie among the Sikhs. This may be so perhaps also about the misguided sections of youth and educated unemployed. Stray individuals too from any class may champion Khalistan. One group one can be certain about is the foreign based Sikh bourgeoisie.

But then extremism can have more extensive social roots and wider ideological appeal. The unemployed youth, especially the educated, can get drawn in, as alienation and lack of stakes can drive them into desperation. Criminal networks, more so the smugglers, because of the complementarity with Khalistanis created by links with Pakistan, can benefit out of conditions created through extremism. Moreover aimless militancy and violence has deflected the infantile adventurism of the ex-naxalites into the cause of extremism.

Where then can the aspiration for a unified, secular Punjabi nationality be found ? Within the given social formation in Punjab, neither among the main social classes as yet, nor among the major religious communities and the important bourgeois political parties. Perhaps only among the enlightened sections of the intelligentsia in addition to the communist parties which have been the only organised political force struggling to see

such a possibility realised. But then they are too weak to turn the situation decisively. Herein lies the present tragedy of Punjab.

The author has benefited immensely from discussions with Kumaresh Chakravorty, Rajender Singh Chauhan and Mohar Singh. Needless to say, none of them are responsible for the views expressed here.

1. There are however many works which are exceptions to this remark I consider works on the recent crisis by Harish K. Puri, "The Akali Agitation An Analysis of Socio-Economic Bases of Protest," *Economic and Political Weekly* (*EPW*, henceforth), January 22, 1983 ; Sucha Singh Gill and K C Singhal, "The Punjab Problem : Its Historical Roots" (*EPW*, Apr l 7, 1984 , Gopal Singh, "Socio-Economic Bases of the Punjab Crisis," *EPW*, January 7, 1984 as ones avoiding one-sided treatment. There are many other works on the present crisis which are full of very useful insights, viz , A S. Narang, *Storm Over Sutlej* (New Delhi, 1983), M.J. Akabar, *India : The Siege Within—Challenges to a Nation's Unity* (Penguin, 1983), Pramod Kumar *et al*, *Punjab—Crisis , Context and Trends* (Chandigarh, 1984) ; among others. Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge, 1974), Part IV, is an indispensable reading.
2. This point has been most persistently and incisively argued by Rajni Kothari. See his recent, "The New Face of Democracy ' in Amrik Singh, *ed*, *Punjab in Indian Politics : Issues and Trends* (Delhi, 1985) Kothari has been ably doing so since he wrote, "The End of the Era," *Seminar*, January 1976. While agreeing with most of his observations, I think there is a great deal to argue about the causes of these.
3. The class character of the Akali Dal, in spite of the fact that it continues to claim to represent the Sikh community in the same refrain, has undergone important changes. Prior to independence it was primarily controlled by the feudal elements. During the period of the popular upheavals at the time of the Gurdwara Movement (1920s) the radical peasant forces succeeded in ousting the feudal element and took over the leadership During this period the feudal elements went out of it and formed a rival Central Akali Dal However after the 1936 period, especially after the 1937 elections, they came back in and wrested control of the party. During the pre-1950 period the feudal elements either controlled the party or were a strong force within it Today however much the Akali Dal continues to harp on the communal aspects, they represent the class interests of the capitalist and capitalist oriented sections of the agriculturists in the Punjab society.
4. Amrik Singh has shown convincingly how Congress has used the Panjab crisis for "narrow" party political gains. See his "An Approach to the Problem" in Amrik Singh, ed., *op. cit.* (Delhi, 1985).
5. For details of this before independence, see G. Blyn, *Agricultural Trends in India, 1891-1947 : Output Availability and Productivity* (Philadelphia, 1966) ; see also Amiya Bagchi "Reflections on the patterns of Regional Growth in India during

the Period of British Rule," Occasional Paper No. 5, Centre for Studies in Soc Sciences, Calcutta, pp 38-51, published in *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. XC Part I, No. 180, January-June, 1976 See also his, *Private Investment in Ind 1900-1939* (Cambridge, 1972) ; Chapter IV.

6. For the Statewise Distribution of Factories see S.L. Shetty, "Industrial Grov and Structure : As Seen Through Annual Survey of Industries," *EPW*, Octo 2, and October 9, 1982. According to this analysis Punjab does not figure in t top nine industrialised states ; p. 1667.

7. Javeed Alam, "Class, Political and National Dimensions of the State Autono Movements in India," *Social Scientists*, No. 111, August 1982. The above co tains my detailed argument on the question of centralisation of state power India.

8. I have borrowed the notion of "disjunction" from Amiya K. Bagchi, "Reflectio on the Patterns of Regional Growth . . ." *op cit.* He writes : ". . . Growth large-scale Industry in eastern India or Bombay did not stimulate the growth agriculture as a whole in these regions. On the other side, growth of agricult ral output as a whole did not lead to any substantial growth of large-sc industry in Punjab before independence. Thus the colonial-economy impose *dual disjunction* between the growth of agriculture and the growth of indust In this situation, with some exceptions, the industrial entrepreneurs of n emerged neither from the ranks of large farmers nor from the ranks of artisa but from those of traders . In some ways the easy mobility of trading capi as between different field of profitable investment was also translated int mobility between different regions of India. This interregional mobility of capi in a situation of abundance of labour in most parts of India *thwarted the em gence of sub-economies* in which agricultural and industrial growth stimula each other. This also partly explains the failure of surplus-producing regions act as *nodes* of cumulative industrial growth in the period after 1939." p. (Emphasis Added).

9. These figures have been computed by Promod Kumar, *et al, Punjab Cris Context and Trends* (Chandigarh, 1984), pp. 55-61, see esp. Table : 12, p. 59.

10. J S. Sandhu and Ajit Singh, "Industrial Development in Punjab : Some Fe tures" in R.S. Johar and J S. Khanna, eds., *Studies in Punjab Economy* (Amrits 1983), p. 137 and Table 4, p. 147.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 135. See also for this as well as for Note : 10. R.S. Bawa a Parminder Singh, "An Analysis into the Inter District Variations in Industr Development in Punjab," *PSE Economic Analyst*, Vols. III & IV, December June, 1982 and 1983.

12. The number of Tractors for 10,00,000 hectares of net cultivated area in Panjab the year 1972 was 1020. The All-India average is 104 tractors. The lowest inte sity of tractor use is in West Bengal where there are only 11 tractors to 10 00,0 hectares ; see *Indian Agriculture in Brief* (GOI, New Delhi, 1978).

13. *Statistical Hand Book of Punjab, 1982-83* (Issued by : The Ecnnomic Adviser Government of Punjab, Chandigarh, 1983).

14. This has been calculated by R.S. Johar, J.S. Khanna and P.S. Raikby, "Indu trial Development of Panjab : A Study in Characterisation, Case for, and Con traints" in R.S. Johar & J S. Khanna, *op. cit.*, p. 171. The methodology or ba for arriving at these figures have not been given.

15. It is because of the communalised nature of the control of monopolistic networks, not so much due to economic radicalism, that Akali Dal has strongly pleaded for complete nationalisation of certain key sectors of the non-agricultural economy The Anandpur Sahib Resolution states . "The Shiromani Akali Dal stands for complete nationalisation of the trade in foodgrains and as such, shall endeavour to nationalize the wholesale trade in foodgrains through the establishment of state agencies." It states its stand on industries as follows "The Shiromani Akali Dal strongly advocates that all key industries should be brought under the public sector.
"It is of the opinion that basic consumer industries should be immediately nationalised to stabilise the prices of the consumer goods and to save the poor consumer from exploitation at the hand of industrialists and the middleman " A little later it adds . "Every industrial unit beyond worth one crore assets should be brought under the public sector. The Akali Dal stands for progressive nationalisation of transport."
Its class character as the spokesman of the capitalist landlords and rich peasants comes out clearly when it argues for an upward revision of land ceilings from the present 17 acres per family. It states ". . . the existing legislation on land ceiling would have to be revised and a firm ceiling of 30 standard acres per family would have to be enforced with proprietory rights to the actuals tillers " This same class character also comes out when it states that "The Shiromani Akali Dal shall try to fix the prices of the agricultural produce on the *basis of the returns of the middle class farmers.* Such prices would be notified well before the sowing season and *only the state governments would be empowered* to fix such prices." The above quotes from the Anandpur Sahib Resolution are the official one released by Giani Ajmer Singh on 1 August 1977 as the Draft of the New Policy Programme of the Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar, 1977). This resolution was originally adopted by the working committee of the Dal at Sri Anandpur Sahib on 16-17 October, 1973 (Emphasis added).

16. G S. Bhalla and G.K Chadha, "Green Revolution and the Small Peasant A Study of Income Distribution in Punjab Agriculture," *EPW*, May 15 and May 22, 1982, report that the larger farmer, rich peasants and landlords—are using only a fraction of their surplus for capital formation in agriculture itself. There is little evidence of what is happening to the huge surpluses nor any evidence of large-scale house construction or investments in industry, p 832.

17. Studies have shown that there is a strong tendency within Punjab agriculture towards a collapse of differentiated peasantry around one of the poles. There has been an enormous increase in the number of poor peasant between 1961 and 1971. The number of those with holdings below 2.5 acres has gone up from 6.19 per cent to 37.68 per cent. Likewise the number of agricultural labourers has shot up from 17 per cent in 1951 to 38 26 per cent in 1981 This tendency towards the collapse at the poor peasant extreme of differentiation is also revealed in the distribution of assets with the top 10 per cent of the households owning 76 per cent of the assets whereas the bottom 70 per cent owning only 6 94 per cent. Data taken from *Statistical Hand Book Punjab* (Issued by the Economic Adviser to Government, Punjab) ; R.S. Johar and Parminder Singh, "Agricultural Development in Punjab since 1966-67" in R.S Johar and J.S. Khanna, eds , *op. cit.*, Promod Kumar et al., *op. cit.*, and G.S. Bhalla & G.K Chadha, *op. cit.*

18. See the above *note*.

19. These figures have been reproduced in K S. Gill, "Agricultural Development in Punjab" in R S. Johar and J.S Khanna eds., *op. cit.*, Table : 7, p. 30.

20. The most detailed treatment of the language question and its communal overtones is available in Paul Brass, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-98.

21. For a brief summary of the position of various peasants classes on Migratory Labour see Promod Kumar, et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 84-86.

22. Kumaresh Chakravorty. "The Burden of Modernisation." *Financial Express*, February 9, 1983.

23. G.S. Bhalla & G.K Chadha, *op. cit.*, point out that marginal and small peasants are incurring deficits, if we take the *mean*. The small peasants at best break even. They also detected a decline in relative productivity of the poor peasants which is being made up by increasing cropping intensity. Increasing the cropping intensity for poor peasants is possible because of the assured supply of labour, being mostly family based. The overall disadvantage of the poor peasants will increase, under present conditions because of increasing capital intensity. Apart from cropping intensity, the other means by which the poor peasants remain viable is availability of non-farm income which, in their case is above 50 per cent whereas it is 20 per cent for the agricultural households as a whole (p. 832) ; to take an instance, "40 per cent of the cultivators at the lowest rung of the ladder with 16 per cent of total operated area account for 21 per cent of the total income from dairying This indicates that inequalities in income from dairying are much milder than inequalities in the distribution of land and income therefrom" (p. 833). The same is the case with poultry, wage-employment inside and outside agriculture, small household enterprises and so on.

24. ". . . the rate of unemployment in Punjab is very high in several categories commerce postgraduates, 26.4% (India, 4 5%) ; commerce graduates, 17.9% (India, 11.9%) ; arts graduates, 12.6% (India ; 15.7%) ; arts post-graduates, 12.3% (India, 3 0%) ; science graduates 8.1% ; (India, 5.8%) ; science post-graduates, 6.8% (India, 3.9%) ; agricultural, graduates, 6.8% (India, 11.9%), engineers (diploma), 13.1% (India, 20.2%). The categories with low rate of unemployment are : engineers (degree), 3 4% (India, 7.4%) ; medical graduates, 0.3% (India, 2 2%) , and veterinary graduates, 0.3% (India, 1.7%). The overall rate of unemployment among the graduates and engineering diploma holders is 11.8% (India, 12.6%). It is much higher than the average rate of (usual status) unemployment (2.37%) among the labour force. The problem of joblessness among the educated is far more serious than among the labour force as a whole. In Punjab, the future employment prospects for the educated manpower seem to be even bleaker, shows that if unemployment among them is to be wiped out by the end of the Sixth Five Year Plan period (March 1983), the 1978 level of employment will have to increase as follows : commerce graduates, 89.9% and post-graduates, 73.5% ; arts graduates, 55.3% ; and post-graduates, 35.9%, engineers (diploma), 50.4%. No conceivable rate and pattern of growth could achieve this". K.S. Gill, "Employment and Unemployment in Punjab in R S. Johar and J S. Khanna, *op. cit.*, pp 303-04.

25. The Anandpur Sahib resolution states : "The Shiromani Akali Dal strongly opposes the demarcation of food zones and the attendant restriction on the movement of foodgrains. The whole country should be the single food zone."

26. One of the more incisive analysis of the infirmities of the Akali Dal's stand on the issue of state autonomy is K.R. Bowbwall's, "Sikh Identity, Akali Dal and Federal Polity," *EPW*, 6 June 1986.

27. I have borrowed this phrase from K.R. Bombwall, *Ibid.*

28. Among others, see Paul Wallace, "Religions and Secular Politics in Punjab : The Sikh Dilemma in Competing Political Systems," in *Punjab Journal of Politics*, V. I, January-June, 1981 ; see also Harish Puri, 'The Akali Agitation . . ." *op. cit.*

29. It is on this point that this argument departs from those who hold Congress(I) solely responsible for the aggravation of the present crisis in Punjab. See Amrik Singh, *op. cit.*, (Note : 4), among others, for a cogent presentation of Congress(I) role in the building and aggravation of the crisis.

30. My position here is much closer to Dipanker Gupta. See his "The Communalising of Punjab, 1980-1985," *EPW*, July 13, 1985. I do not agree with the kind of position which has been taken by Rajiv A. Kapur, *Sikh Separatism : The Politics of Faith* (London, 1986) where the implicit argument seems to be that each successive phase of the "Sikh" politics is a continuation and enlargement on the preceding phase. This seems to me to be a most blatant kind of reductionism. Kapur's work, moreover, fails to give any new insights although it is an extremely well-researched book.

31. For a quick rapid survey of the kind of religious movement within different religious communities a useful reference book is Robert D. Baird, *Religion in Modern India* (New Delhi, 1981), for Sikhs specificially Kushwant Singh's two volume study, *A History of the Sikhs* (Oxford, 1966) is the most comprehensive work and for Hindu consciousness in Punjab K.W Johns, *Arya Dharm : Hindu Consciousness in 19th Century Punjab* (Delhi, 1976), is a useful work.

32. A good balanced account of the ups and downs and the turns and twist in the Punjab politics with alternative possibilities at critical points is Harkishan Singh Surjeet, "Lessons of Punjab," *Marxist*, Vol. II, October-December, 1984.

33. To grasp the dynamics of the process of differentiation of religious communities one from the other and of their unity with the striving for national independence is important both for avoiding one-sided judgements as well as the creeping communal interpretations. A large body of journalistic writing centered on the issue of Sikhs in politics has been a victim of these kinds of judgements. Foremost among these has been Girilal Jain, Chief Editor, *Times of India*. From among his numerous pieces on Punjab let us take a few as instances. He writes : "The Akalis, let us face it, were not an independent component of the larger freedom movement . . . They could not be (i) For they were the products of a British inspired movement among the Sikhs which emphasised their separateness from Hindus. This emphasis was not accidental. It was part of the well-established "divide and rule policy." The Akalis, of course had their problems with the British *but these* related to their view of Sikh interests ; these had nothing to do with India's independence." See his, ' What Ails Sikh Community : Akalis and Intellectuals," *Times of India*, August 1 12, 1986 (Emphasis added). This calls for comments. First, the question of collaboration with the British. If used in an unqualified, bland manner most of the political forces and groups and formations will fall ander the same judgement including those that led the Indian "renaissance."

It has been a peculiar feature of Indian history that most of the ascendant group in their initial assertiveness sought the cooperation and protection of the British It has not been very different with Hindus and Muslims too except for one contextual difference which made the Muslim collaboration divisive and disruptive it came, unlike earlier Hindu cooperation, when the struggle for independence had already commenced. Sikh assertion through Singh Sabhas and Chief Khalsa Diwan falls into the same category. But the Akali agitation during the Gurudwara Movement was different. The Akali activists drove out the collaborating feudal elements out of the Akali Dal and adopted unambiguous postures towards the freedom movement.

Moreover, the divide and rule tactics involved efforts at weaning away whole communities but it succeeded with only sections of these communities and not the whole of them More often only a small minority out of these communities became a tool for disruptive politics of the British Such tactics undoubtedly aggravated political divisions but they were not the basis of differentiations The success of divide and rule also varied enormously at different phases of our national struggle. 1920s, implied in the quote above, was not one the suceess of divide and rule tactics. In fact, radical mass mobilizations were also bringing people together. Later half of the 1930s witnessed the success of these policies as in some earlier periods.

These types of judgements, of which Girilal Jain's piece is an example of undifferentiated history, are instances of surreptitious communal understanding we must guard against if we wish to re-establish understanding and bonds among communities. Similar creeping communal postures can also be detected in an editorial which he, probably, wrote. The killing of of Hindus and subjecting them to terror is undoubtedly something horrible and must be unitedly fought by one and all. But this editorial gives to the issue a communal twist. Doing the "duty of Hindus" is made into a peculiar kind of "litmus test" for Akali's under Barnala's leadership. It goes on : "If they prevaricate, they can have no title to stay in office ; they will have to be dismissed . . . "Editorial," *Times of India*, June 26-27, 1986).

*ABHIJIT SEN**

Shocks and Instabilities in an Agriculture-Constrained Economy : India 1964-1985

BASED on long run considerations, it has been argued by many that agriculture was the constraining sector in the Indian economy during the period 1953-1976. However, this paper, attempts to argue a less popular case : that the subsequent events are consistent with the continued operation of the same constraint. The paper is organised as follows : Section 2, reviews the performance of the Indian economy, paying particular attention to three major periods of shock, identifying the stabilisation policies followed in each case. Section 3, examines changes in income shares with a view to characterising the major processes at work. In Section 4, I first summarise certain conclusions from my previous work dealing with the 1953-1976 period, and then argue that not only are demand problems and foodgrain stocks consistent with the operation of an agriculture constraint—they are implied by the latter in a market economy. Section 5, concludes with a policy proposal.

Economic Performance and Stabilisation Efforts

In Table 1 are set out some key indicators of the performance of the Indian economy over the entire post-independence period. The periodisation chosen in this table has been done with a view to present a roughly quinquennial comparison but one based on growth rates calculated between similar 'peak' agricultural years. This is necessary because any other basis of comparison tends to give a distorted picture of underlying trends in an economy so sensitive to whether fluctuations as the Indian one is.

The most important conclusion which can be reached from this table is that, with the exception of export growth, Indian economic performance in the two decades since the mid-sixties has been worse than in the decade preceding that point. This is so with respect to growth in national income and in the indices of production in agriculture and industry ; in the growth of investment and of the per-capita consumption of food and clothing ; and also with respect to the rate of inflation. This is an important obser-

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vation because the mid-sixties represent a turning point in post-indepe dence Indian economic history. It is at this point that the clear commi ment to national economic planning, as encompassed in the first three Fi Year Plans, was markedly diluted in the face of wars, drought and seve balance of payments problems. In all subsequent years, national econom planning has been a much more half-hearted affair and the focus h shifted gradually but definitely away from an emphasis on public inves ment and physical targets towards greater reliance on market forces an in attempts to influence these through pricing and financial policies.

Table I

Selected rates of growth in the Indian economy 1953-84

S. No.	*Indication*	*1953-54 to 1958-59*	*1958-59 to 1964-65*	*1964-65 to 1970-71*	*1970-71 to 1977-78*	*1977-7 to 1983-8*
1.	Net domestic product (constant prices)	3.6	4.5	3.1	3 6	3.9
1.	Per capita N.D.P. (constant prices)	1.6	2.4	0.9	1.3	1.7
3.	Agricultural production	2.8	2.8	2.4	2.5	2.6
4.	Industrial output	6.7	9.3	3 2	4.7	4.6
5.	Gross domestic fixed capital formation of which (i) public (ii) private	9.9 12.1 8.5	7.8 13.1 2.9	4.0 −1.3 8.9	5.8 8.5 3.9	4.0 6.3 1.8
6.	Export quantum	0.0	3.7	3.5	7.7	4 5
7.	Import quantum	9.8	4.9	0.8	5.9	9.0
8.	External terms of trade	0.9	1 6	2.1	−1 6	−3.0
9.	Per capita foodgrain availability	0.6	1.0	−1.8	0 0	0.5
10.	Per capita availability of cloth	0.8	2.8	−1.2	−2.0	1.5
11.	Consumer price index	2.2	3.8	6.7	8.3	9.1
12.	Domestic terms of trade (agricultural prices—industrial prices)	−0.1	−0.2	3.1	−0.3	−0.3

It is my considered view, elaborated further in a later section, th this shift in policy was an unfortunate one. However, in all fairness, must be pointed out that the period after 1964-65 has been beset with o shock after another : the unprecedented drought of 1965-66 and 1966-6 the Indo-Pak Wars of 1965 and 1971, and the oil price shocks in 1973 an

1979. It is not entirely surprising, therefore, that for much of the period since the mid-sixties, government policy has been concerned more with immediate crisis management and with measures for post-shock stabilisation than with planning for long run growth. Given this, and the fact that different stabilisation episodes have involved different policies and led to different lessons, it is important to examine these in some detail.

The Shock of 1965-67

As is by now well known, the unprecedently severe droughts of 1965-66 and 1966-67 were not the only cause of suspension and dilution of the policy of planned industrialisation. This was accompanied by a serious external shock. The strategy of import substitution of the first Three Five Year Plans was to a large extent dependent on increasing inflows of foreign-aid.

But ideological positions had hardened in the West, which had never approved of the Indian attempt at independent capitalist development, and there were increasing pressures on India to modify her economic philosophy. The final blow came in 1965, when a war was fought between India and Pakistan. The aid-donors reacted by cutting off aid to both the warring states. In 1966, in the midst of a famine, the Aid India Consortium (AIC), led by the multilateral aid agencies, offered to resume aid to India, but there was a price—India had to open its economy to the rest of the world. The AIC demanded, and got, a substantial devaluation of the Indian rupee (of 57.5 percent) and considerable liberalisation of imports.

Despite a drought of unprecedented proportions for a period of two years (1965-67), the rest of the economy fared not too badly in the face of it: Real GDP and consumption grew at 2.7 percent and 5.8 percent respectively, while the balance of trade improved by over 11 percent. These facts have been cited in the literature as providing strong support for the soundness of orthodox stabilisation policy.[1] But the seeming orthodoxy was accompanied by some home-grown heterodoxy as well. In particular, there was no effort at clamping on the fiscal and monetary brakes for bringing down the rate of inflation, which stood at 14-15 percent per annum. Although public fixed investment was cut sharply and government consumption reduced somewhat, these were more than offset by increased transfers to the private sector, and both the interest rate and the rate of growth of money supply were maintained at the earlier levels.

This was the first major external shock that India had to face, and the psychological repercussions were considerably greater than the economic. The crucial lesson learnt during this traumatic period was that foreign aid could no longer be counted on and that greater efforts would be needed to overcome the investible resources, food and foreign exchange constraints from internal sources. Also, the political consequences of the

famine and consequent inflation led to greater emphasis on food price policy-both to moderate consumer prices and guarantee adequate returns to producers.[2] An extremely large chunk of the available resources went into supporting private investment in agriculture and into building up food-grain stocks. Consequently, investment in infrastructure was retarded. Private sector investment in the industrial sector, however, continued to grow : increasing at an average annual rate of above 4 percent in real terms.

On the foreign exchange front a number of developments took place. The boost given to exports by the 1966 devaluation, though small, continued over the period. Ad-hoc measures aimed at export promotion were implemented, which too had their role to play in maintaining Indian exports even after the effects of the devaluation gradually were off (by about 1968-69). More importantly, the liberalisation of imports that had come about in 1966 due to external pressures was reversed around the same time. This led to a decline in the import propensity from 5.8 percent in 1967-68 to 4.3 percent in 1972-73. The combination of export growth and import restriction led to a sharp reduction in the trade deficit from a high of—837 crore ruppees in 1966-67 to +104 crores in 19 2-73.

The macro-policy stance was a fairly liberal one. Real government expenditures rose at a rate of 4.5 percent per annum, whereas government revenues grew only at a rate of 2.4 percent. Consequently, the government's budget deficit grew rapidly. This was financed partly by borrowings, both internal and external, but mainly through deficit financing. Thus money supply (M1) grew roughly by 16.2 percent per annum, allowing the interest rates to be held down to the pre-1966 levels. However, the experience with rapid inflation in foodgrains prices in the drought years resulted in efforts, mainly through imports and food-stock management, which were fairly successful at moderating this important source of inflation after 1967, through till 1973.

The Oil Price Shocks

The year 1973 marks another water-shed in Indian economic history. The year was marked by two important events : (a) The economy was in the middle of a prolonged agricultural slump spanning the period 1972-75, during which agricultural production was on the average about 5 percent below the trend levels. (b) The first oil-price shock which raised the international crude oil prices by a factor of four between September 1973 and April 1974.

The agricultural decline led to a sharp escalation of the inflation rate, which surged from 7.5 percent in 1970-73 to 20 percent in 1973-75, much of the increase coming before the oil-price rise. The latter, in turn, fuelled the inflationary process, as well as leading to a sharp deterioration of the trade balance.

The economy, however, was able to adjust to the external shock surprisingly rapidly. The current account deficit, which peaked in 1974-75, was converted to a surplus in 1976-77, and stayed in surplus until 1979-80, when the second oil-price shock occurred. The other face of this recovery was a dramatic moderation of the inflation rate. Prices actually fell during 1975-76 and grew at an annual rate of only 2.4 percent over the next three years.

This turn around was caused partly by highly favourable exogenous developments, both internal and external. To begin with, 1975-76 was a bumper year for the agricultural sector, with output rising by 13.8 percent over the previous year and by 4 per cent over the trend level. In the previous year (1974-75), private speculative stocks had increased to an unprecedented level of over 3 percent, of GDP. The good harvest and the imminent decline in agricultural prices led to massive dishoarding, and the prices of agricultural products dropped consequently by over 7 percent.

On the external front, there were three favourable developments. First, India was able to get relatively easy access to external funds to meet the increased deficit in the trade balance caused by the oil price rise. Over the two years 1973-75 about 43 percent of the total trade deficit was financed by low or unconditional short-term loans from the IMF. Also, gross external assistance grew from Rs. 342 crores in 1972-73 to Rs 834 crores in 1974-75 and to Rs. 1220 crores in 1975-76.

Second, exports grew rapidly over this period. This was due partly to positive external developments and partly to domestic policy. During the period 1972-73 to 1974-75 exports grew by about 27 percent per year, but the volume growth was only about 7 percent. In 1975-76 and 1976-77 export earnings rose at an annual rate of 26 percent with volume growth of about 18 percent. Much of this latter growth, however, occurred through bilateral trading arrangements with the Comecon countries and to the suddenly affluent oil producing countries.

Thus, between the period 1973-74 and 1978-79, export earnings grew by about 20 percent a year and export volumes by about 9 percent. This was considerably higher than the growth in world trade, which rose by about 4 percent a year in volume terms.

Third, a positive side-effect of the oil-price rise was the migration of Indian labour to the Gulf countries and the consequent remittances to India by them. These grew at an average rate of over 40 percent per year for the five years following the oil-price shock. This was a major contributory factor in the rapid build-up of Indian foreign exchange reserves in the post 1974-75 period.

Turning now to the policy response of the government to the shock, it should be clear from the preceding discussion that in retrospect little stablisation was actually needed. But given the uncertainities facing the policy-makers, it was natural that some form of crisis management be

employed. The entire 1973-1979 period can be divided into three sub periods : 1972-73 to 1974-1975, when the oil-shock worked its way through the Indian system ; 1974-75 to 1976-77, when the over-all picture started to be clearer ; and 1976-77 to 1978-79, when the attempt was to bring the policies to a stable long-run path.

Starting with the exchange-rate movements, the real effective exchange-rate dropped by 8 percent between 1972 and 1975, and by 4 per-cent per annum between 1975 and 1979. Monetary policy shifted to a restrictive stance early during this period. The growth of money supply (M1) dropped from about 16 percent in 1970-73 to 11.5 percent in 1973-75, 15 percent in 1975-77 and to only 5 percent in 1977-79. More importantly, interest rates were revised upwards very sharply in 1974-75 and more or less maintained at the higher level over the entire period. This, coupled with the slow down in the inflation rate, pushed real interest rates up from the low, and sometimes negative, levels during 1966-73 to extremely high levels in 1973-79.

The fiscal stance during this period presents an interesting picture, and reflects the short-run nature of Indian policy-making. Immediately after the oil-price shock (or, as some would have it, the 1972-73 agricultural failure), it is often claimed that fiscal policy became highly contractionary. The growth rate of total real government expenditures dropped from the 4.4 percent average of the previous period to—0.1 percent during 1973-75. The growth rate of real revenues, however, fell even more sharply from +8.9 percent to −4 percent. The only component of government expenditure that was actually reduced was public fixed capital formation.

The period 1975-77 was highly expansionary by any measure. Real government expenditure rose at an annual rate of 18.7 percent. Although some of this rise was due to the rapid growth of public food-grain stocks, which occurred because the bumper 1975-76 harvest caused the government support price for wheat to become a binding floor on the farm-gate price, the major effect was that of an annual average 24 percent rise in public fixed capital formation. Although government revenues rose sharply (13.7 percent), the budget deficit widened.

The expansionary fiscal tendencies of 1975-76 were checked in 1977-79. Real government expenditure rose by 4.8 percent per annum—roughly the rate in the pre-1973 period. The difference, however, was that in this period the rise in public fixed capital formation was not as marked as earlier. Government revenues rose by 7.7 per cent per year, which had the effect of reducing the budget deficit quite substantially. This is clearly reflected in the slow growth of money-supply.

Given these huge swings in the government's fiscal action components, it may be misleading to treat the entire period 1973-79 as a block. However, doing so shows that there was considerable fiscal restraint. Real expenditures and both its components grew at 6.8 per cent per year, and

revenues at 5.8 per cent—a reasonably balanced behaviour.

The 1973 79 era came to an end on almost the same note as it had started. 1979 witnessed both an agricultural failure as well as the second oil-price shock. As before, the inflation rate mounted rapidly from the 4.8 per cent of 1977-79 to 17.5 per cent per year during 1979-82. At the same time the trade balance dipped from a deficit of Rs 621 crores in 1977-78 to Rs. 1088 crores in 1978-79 to Rs. 5868 crores in 1981-82 and to over Rs. 8000 crores in 1985-86.

The adjustment to this shock was very different from the first. The trade balance is now a far cry from anything resembling a sustainable level. The reasons for this slow adjustment can be traced partly to the external environment and partly to the policies adopted by the government Insofar as the agricultural output effect is concerned, it behaved more or less as before-staying for two years below the trend level and recovering in 1981-82 by 6.7 percent over the previous year and by 2 7 percent above the trend level.

External sources of funds during this period were much more limited than before. Indeed a large part of the current deficits had to be borrowed from the IMF, much of it under the high conditionality Extended Fund Facility arrangement. Although India terminated the arrangement prematurely, over the 1980-84 period she obtained SDR 4.7 billion from the IMF, which represents over half the cumulative current deficit.

The other major contribution to India's recovery in the previous period—workers' remittances from the Gulf though remaining at high levels, stagnated for a variety of reasons, ranging from a slow-down of world oil demand to the Iran-Iraq War.

Export performance too suffered a set-back, the annual growth rate dropping from 9.4 percent in volume terms during 1973 79 to only 3 6 percent. This was due primarily to the worsening world recession whereby the growth of world exports went from 3 6 percent in the first period to a mere 1.6 percent. The situation was not helped by the exchange rate movements. The real effective exchange rate actually appreciated mildly over the period. Export incentives were, however, enhanced and a number of special schemes were, introduced to boost exports. All in all, therefore, the total extent of incentives was probably no lower than in the previous period.

The policy stance in this period was intially one of relative caution and moderation. For the first three years following the shock, government expenditures rose at an annual average rate of 4 percent whereas revenues actually fell by 0.8 percent a year, money supply grew at a 12 per cent rate and real public fixed capital formation went up by 2.3 percent a year. Imports were liberalised quite substantially by relaxing quota limits. This, coupled with a marked increase in the import-intensity of public investment, led to a rapid growth of non-oil imports. Later on i e. after 1983-84, these latter trends have been further accentuated because the fiscal stance has become markedly more expansionary and because import liberalisation has been

pursued with greater vigour. Unlike ever before, the government is now willing to borrow abroad at commercial rates in order to sustain its chosen policy.

Thus, each of the shocks involved a combination of domestic agricultural shortfall and a balance of payments crisis. Moreover, in each case real public fixed capital expenditure was cut in response to the shock and was allowed to increase when agricultural output recovered. Also, each of these shocks resulted in a contraction of government real revenues, partly because of slowdown in industry and partly because customs revenues fell. However, the nature of the external environment and the other policy responses were very different. In the mid-sixties case, both devaluation and trade liberalisation were more or less forced upon India by the donors and were to some extent reversed as conditions improved. The main lesson learnt was that agricultural growth and food security were to be emphasised, the latter even at the cost of growth. In the first oil shock case, the adjustment was largely home grown and consisted mainly of a very contractionary stance in fiscal and monetary policy which in the event was excessive because subsequent conditions in weather and in the external environment turned out to be favourable. With the adjustment resulting in high foodgrain stocks and comfortable foreign exchange reserves, the period ended with a mood of complacency regarding both these traditional constraints to Indian economic growth. Not surprisingly, energy supplies became the main domestic area of concern. And, in the event of an unexpectedly good export performance, there was optimism regarding export led growth. Unlike in the case of the first, the second oil price shock was accompanied by an adverse external climate due mainly to the onset of world recession However, despite this the government concentrated this time on a medium to long run adjustment instead of a short run stablization as in the past. The content of this adjustmemt is a policy based on trade and domestic liberalisation and this explains in part why unlike in the two previous episodes, the Balance of Payments deficit has been allowed to grow for an extended period of time. Since 1966, the government's economic philosophy has changed so much that it now espouses enthusiastically what it was then forced to accept reluctantly be aid donors.

Income, Its Distribution, Poverty and Savings

Poverty in India is concentrated mainly in rural areas and the only direct measures of rural poverty are those available from the Consumer Expenditure Surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization. Upto 1973-74, these surveys were conducted more or less on an annual basis and their results have been extensively analysed. The consensus is that the proportion of the 'poor' in total rural population, although varying quite substantially from year to year, tended on balance to increase secularly from 1960-61 to 1973-74, and was, not surprisingly, highest in

1966-67 (the second of the two consecutive drought years) Further analysis of this data suggests that this 'head-count' measure of poverty was related negatively to real agricultural production per capita and positively to increases in the price of food. Since 1973-74, the frequency of these consumer surveys have been drastically reduced-and were conducted at only two subsequent points : 1977-78 and 1983-84. Of these, moreover, the 1983-84 data are not yet available to private researchers, although recently the Planning Commission has used these (but after certain unspecified adjustments) to compare the incidence of poverty in 1977-78 and 1983-84. The conclusions reached on the basis of this scanty data is that the proportion of the poor was lower in 1977-78 than in 1973-74 and that this was further reduced by 1983-84.

However, this evidence of decreasing poverty in more recent years should not be accepted uncritically. First, the only two years 1977-78 and 1983-84 for which data are available were extraordinarily good agricultural years and their comparison with the below average year 1973-74 is bound to give a picture of improvement which need not correspond to the underlying trend. Secondly, there is a suspicion that the adjustments to data made by the planning Commission in order to compare 1977-78 to 1983-84 are such as to further bias the estimates in a direction suggesting a reduction in poverty.[3] Thirdly, measures of poverty derived from Consumer Expenditure data relate to current consumption and not to income and this may give a misleading picture of long run trends if the consumption of the poor has been maintained by short run asset depletion. In a period marked by so many shocks, it is almost certain that individual households have had to make asset adjustments to cope with unexpected events and it would not be inconsistent if, in such a period, short run consumption turns out to be quite unrelated to income or to the long run consumption potential. Fifth, and most importantly, macro-economic data on income shares, savings rates and food consumption suggest strongly, and contrary to the indications from these surveys, that income distribution and rural poverty have worsened.

Considering income shares first, national accounts data show a dramatic decline in the share of agriculture and allied sectors in GDP from 1973-74, declining from 49.8 in percent in 1973-74 to 40.4 percent in 1977-78 to 35.7 percent in 1983-84. Second, within agriculture, interest, rent and profits have absorbed an increasing portion of the income, increasing from 4 6 percent in 1973-74, to 6.4 percent in 1977-78 to 6.6 percent in 1983-84, with a corresponding decline in the share of peasants and agricultural labourers. Figures from the National Accounts show that the income of these groups when deflated by the consumer price index grew at only 1.3 percent p.a. between 1970-71 and 1983-84 · figure considerably less than the growth rate of the agricultural population. Moreover, during this period the number of agricultural wage-earners, who are the poorest agriculturists, grew faster than agricultural population, indicating growing

marginalisation, and yet the share of wages in agricultural income declined, particularly between 1977-78 (24 percent) and 1983-84 (20 percent). Further to these monetised data from National Accounts must be added the effects of the precipitous decline in forest area and common village lands which has occured in the last decade. Free goods from these have traditionally been an important consumption source for the rural poor, and all indications are that there has been a very sharp decline in the availability of such goods, particularly fuelwood and fodder.

The above indicates that not only did per-capita agricultural incomes fall in real terms but also that the factoral distribution of this income became more unegual with the share of rent and interest earners improving and that of wage earners worsening. In addition, agricultural incomes have become more unequally distributed over regions. This has happened in two ways: First, output growth has been relatively less in these regions where per-capita agricultural output is lower; and secondly, farm harvest prices have also increased less in these regions[4]. The first of these has been due to the fact that the green revolution has 'worked' only in regions well endowed with irrigation, transport and electricity infrastructure and such infrastructure has expanded most in those states which were already better endowed in this respect. The second of these has been due to the fact that farmers in poorer regions have lost out to merchants and traders. Probably, the best indicator of this is the fact that although since 1970-71 the wholesale prices of rice have increased at a rate 50 percent more than that of wheat (reflecting higher growth of wheat output), farmgate prices of wheat have risen at a rate of 20 percent more than that of rice.

Turning to non-agriculture, it is useful to divide this into its organised and unorganised components. The former consists of the government and large scale enterprises and here employment over the period 1970-71 to 1983-84 grew at 2.4 percent per annum, only slightly more than population growth Real incomes in the organised sector (defined as N.D.P. in the sector deflated by consumer prices) grew at 5.9 percent per annum but the share of wages dropped from 72 percent in 1970-1971 to 67 percent in 1983-84. However, although this suggests a worsening of income distribution also within the organised sector, the wage bill increased at 5.3 percent a year and there was thus a sizeable improvement in per-capita living standards of those fortunate enough to have organised sector employment. This is somewhat surprising in view of the fact that over the period 1965-74, organised workers lost heavily in inflationary periods. The gain picked up here is partly the once and for all increase in real income due to the agricultural price fall in 1975-76, but it also reflects gains subsequently even though inflation was high. The reasons perhaps are twofold : first, the earlier inflationary episode might have significantly increased the effective degree of indexation ; and, secondly, this might mainly reflect increases in the incomes of the salariat whose wages tend to follow the per-capita emloumcnts in the public sector, which increased in real terms at a rate of

percent per annum between 1977-78 and 1983-84.

This, however, was not the case in the non-agricultural unorganised or consisting of small scale enterprises. This was the sector which recor- the highest employment growth, at 7.1 percent per annum, but where, real incomes growing at only 4 8 percent annum, per worker real in- ies declined the sharpest. Moreover, in this sector too, the share of ges declined from 35 percent to 31 percent 1970 71 and 1983-84.

The macro-economic data on sectoral incomes and factor shares thus cate that all groups other than rentiers, profit earners and the organised or employed have actually had declining real per-capita incomes in the decade or so [5] Moreover, factor shares have turned against wages in sectors.[6] From this, one would have to conclude—contrary to the survey its cited earlier—that poverty, at least in the sense of low real incomes he poor, has increased. However, since this conclusion runs counter to nal wisdom based on survey results and because national income data also not be free of errors, it is necessary to check these alternative ids against other indicators.

The two most sensitive indicators of changing income distribution in economy such as India's are perhaps the rate of domestic savings and growth of per-capita foodgrains consumption. Over the period 1970-71 983-84, the rate of gross savings increased from 16.8 percent to 22.1 cent having reached a peak of 24.7 percent in 1978-79. This very high wth in savings is one of the most striking features of the period and it been estimated that throughout 1973-74 to 1983-84, the saving rate was veen 14 and 37 percent higher than what could be expected on the basis unchanged income distribution and the actual income growth since 0 71[7]. On the other hand, with the same income growth and unchanged ome distribution, per capita foodgrains consumption would be expected row at between 0.5 percent to 1 percent per annum between 1970 71 1983-84. In fact, in this period, the actual growth was below 0.15 per- t and, indeed, in no year did the level of per-capita foodgrains consum- reach the peak attained in 1964-65. Although some may adduce possible plausible reasons such as the effect of higher real interest rates or of nges in taste to explain these, the magnitudes, at least in my opinion, too large for such explanations to be sufficient. If this is accepted, the ributive trend indicated by the national accounts statistics should be erred to the contrary one suggested by the sample surveys. Moreover, he same logic, some credence can also be given to the survey point nates (as distinct from the underlying trend) because both years for ch survey data are available—1977-78 and 1983-84 had savings rates ch lay below and levels of foodgrain consumption which lay above their ective trends over the entire period.

If, therefore, national accounts data taare tken to ber ue, then from and other corroborative evidence, the following picture regarding post)-71 trends seems to emerge.[8] During this period, the fastest growing

sector in terms of GDP was the organised private tertiary sector which mainly urban and responds to urban demand. This demand was provid largely by the growth of incomes in the other organised sectors, i.e. priva industry and the government, and from tourist and remittance deman However, the growth of employment in the organised sector as a whole w not much larger than the rate of growth of population and, therefore, di not allow much absorbtion of labour from the unorganised sectors. GD growth in the organised sector was largely a result of increasing output p worker, and organised sector workers shared this productivity gain. Th share of profits in value-added did increase but, especially in the organise manufacturing sector, this was not because of an increasing mark-up ov unit costs which probably either remained constant or fell.[9] The share profits in value-added increased despite constancy in the share of profits i gross-output because although product wages increased at only slightl less than the rate of growth of productivity, unit fuel and raw materi costs increased much faster, probably because of oil price increases.

In the meantime agricultural GDP grew less in constant price term than rural population, and worsening terms of trade meant that re incomes in agriculture grew even less. This, possible asset depletion poorer farmers and the fact that agricultural growth was regionally ver uneven leading to greatly increased seasonal migration, resulted in a ve large growth in the number of workers seeking non-agricultural work. Sin organised sector employment could not absorb this labour force, the ur organised non-agricultural labour force increased sharply. A part migrate to urban areas to join the urban informal sector, but the bulk stayed on rural areas. Here, growth in demand for their services was, however, ver slow because per-capita agricultural real incomes were declining and inves ment demand, both private and public, was sluggish. Private rural inves ment did not grow rapidly because, in addition to the income squeeze, ther was a problem of regional composition. Investment quickly reached plateau in regions well endowed with infrastructure and the scope fo private investment remained very low in regions without adequate infrastru cture. Public rural investment which could have solved this problem, b expanding infrastructure horizontally, was unfortunately almost always th first item to be axed whenever public expenditure was cut in response t the successive shocks discussed earlier. The net outcome of this high growt in supply and low growth in demand for rural labour was a shar reduction in per-worker returns in rural non-agriculture. With the bul of the rural population thus suffering from real income losses, it i not at all surprising that growth in food consumption was sluggish.

On the other hand, increased incomes in the organised sector, and increased inequality generally, resulted in a large growth of savings. This, and the fact that organised sector workers also increased their real incomes and thus remained quiescent is a prime reason why there is today an air of complacency regarding domestic economic issues in official circles,

With high food stocks and thus a credible urban food distribution system, even the urban poor can now be better insulated from shocks than in the past. It is not existentially difficult, under the circumstances for officials to believe the survey results and claim reduced poverty while at the same time trumpeting the achievement of a high savings rate The first claim, I have tried to argue here is false. The second is true, but it too is not necessarily an unalloyed virtue. Unlike the self-employed in the unorganised sector, rentiers and organised sector income receivers do not invest much in physical assets. Not surprisingly, therefore, most of the increase in savings has been in financial assets. Since such savings do not create their own demand, they require the existence of sufficient investors' confidence to be useful. But, as may be seen in Table I, the trend in private investment suggests anything but such confidence and suggests a clue as to why the organised private sector did not grow faster and absorb more labour. I return to this issue in the next section

Supply Constraints to Growth and Problems of Demand

The primary objective of policy for any country, including India, should be the maximising of the growth rate within the constraints set by the economic and political structure. Adjustments to short run shocks and disturbances also need to be viewed within this context. More often than not, however, 'crisis management' becomes the dominant characteristic of policy making, sometimes with rather unfortunate results

Elsewhere,[10] I have tried to integrate and distinguish operationally the three most commonly discussed constraints to growth : those associated with savings, foreign exchange and agricultural growth Very briefly, consider a planner who is attempting to maximise growth of GDP over some specified horizon given exogenously set limits on the marginal propensity to save, the maximum export demand and the maximum rate of domestic agricultural growth. I assume that the planner cannot directly impose his choice of the consumption bundle and has to accept the constraint on demand patterns set by the household level consumption functions I also assume that the planner knows but cannot directly control, the way prices and wages are formed in the economy. With mark-up pricing in non-agriculture and demand clearing pricing in agriculture he can influence domestic relative prices but only at the cost of inflation. He can choose the import level but he is constrained by some upper limits to import substitution and by an upper bound on the amount of balance of payments deficit he can incur. It can be shown that, in this maximisation, only one of theree constraints is usually binding and that for a given binding constraint, the choice reduces to a trade-off between growth and inflation.[11] If either the agriculture or the foreign exchange constraint binds, I call the situation structurally constrained, and the maximum growth consistent with tolerable inflation is less than that which would be warranted by savings rates and capital coefficients

Further details on computation are somewhat redundant here but a few points about policy, especially with a binding structural constraint, are in order. First, with either the agriculture or foreign exchange constraint binding, it is optimal to go simultaneously for maximum feasible exports and maximum feasible import substitution without much regard to comparative advantage. This is because in a labour surplus economy, a slack savings constraint effectively means that the shadow price of domestic factor resources is extremely low

Second, for this reason, issues of resource generation and allocative efficiency are much less important for structurally constrained economies than for savings constrained ones. The primary objectives of medium run policy-making for the former should be to first stabilise supply from the constraining sector and then to maximise the growth of the other sectors, within the limits set by either the acceptable level of inflation or by the balance of payments. If doing so requires that usual measures of allocative efficiency be sacrified, it must necessarily be accepted simply because most of these measures assume the existence of a savings constraint.

Third, the effects of once-off aid and foreign borrowings are very different under the three constraints. With the savings constraint, foreign resource inflows do not cause output to be higher in the short to medium run, but allows extra capacity to be installed for higher output in later years. With structural constraints, however, foreign funds can have a more immediate impact by allowing the imports of the constraining goods, if the resources are so used. These windfall foreign exchange receipts, therefore, cause only steep changes in output levels under structural constraints, with very little growth effects, but have the potential for a more sustained growth raising effect under the savings constraint.

Sustained inflows of aid or debt receipts, on the other hand, have the potential of raising growth rates in structurally constrained economies The magnitude of these effects, however, is very different between the agriculture and foreign exchange constrained situations. The output response of the economy to additions in import capacity in any year depends upon the foreign exchange multiplier With the foreign exchange constraint, imports are required only for the non-competive forms of imported goods. For the agricultural constraint, however marginal requirements of agricultural goods also have to be provided. As a result, the foreign exchange multiplier is always less with an agricultural constraint than it is in the foreign exchange constrained scenario.

Fourth, domestic incomes policies, which attempt to bring about desired income distributions, also have very different effects depending upon the operative constraint. With the savings constraint, such redistributions are likely to have little impact since the problem is one of an overall supply constraint. With the foreign exchange constraint, where the bottle-neck is in the shortage of producer goods or relative luxuries, both of which are demanded more out of non-wage incomes than wages, a more (less) egali-

ncomes policy will increase (decrease) the constrained growth rate. of the agricultural constraint, however, where the bottle-neck is in es which are primarily wage goods, increased egalitarianism will reduce the constrained rate of growth.

nally, it is absolutely crucial that investment in agricultural infras- and in feasible import substitution be carried out. Also policies up exports must be firmly in place. There might be a trade-off import substitution and export promotion but in this event the regarding competitive imports should not be on usual comparative ge lines and such imports should be resorted to only if they add exports than their own value.

my work quoted earlier, I had attempted to identify the operative nt in the Indian case for two periods: 1953-54 to 1964-65 and to 1975-76. To do this, two models had been used—a multi-sector ible general equlibrium model to work out terminal year equilibria nter-temporal macro-economic model to work out constraints on growth. In both periods it was found that the agricultural cons- as the binding one. For our purpose here, it is sufficient to concen- the 1964-65 to 1975-76 simulations. During this period, the actual rates and capital coefficients in the economy would according to the nodel, have permitted a GDP growth rate of 5.3 percent per But according to the terminal year model, in order to achieve this, cultural growth rate would need to have been about 3.6 percent m. However, the actual agricultural growth rate was only 2 3 per- annum and the model predicted that if domestic demand patterns be maintained with this actual agricultural growth and with- ner inflation and/or higher balance of payments deficits then the owth rate would need to be constrained to 3.0 percent per annum as precisely the actual attained.

1975-76, the country ended up with an additional 11 million tons of n stocks, and in the base variant it was assumed that such stocks ired by the government. However, an alternative simulation was where terminal year stocks were kept down to a 'normal' level of n tons and it was found that in this case the agriculture constrained rate of GDP would have risen from 3.0 percent per annum to ent per annum but, clearly, this too would have been significantly an the savings constrained rate. In these runs, exports, foreign the inflation rate were all assumed to be the actuals for the year and alternative simulations showed that although higher higher foreign aid and a higher inflation rate would all have d GDP growth, the latter was not very sensitive to any of these. In ır, the model calculations showed that for the country to have the savings constrained rate through higher exports, but without agricultural growth, exports in 1975-76 would have to be three ir actual value. Or, in other words, India would have ...

agriculture constrained during the period only if the world economy coul absorb additional manufactured exports from India in 1975-76 larger tha the total exports of Brazil or South Korea in that year.

There has been no significant increase in the rate of agricultura growth after 1975-76 and export prospects (and India's performance) hav distinctly worsened with the world recession. Yet, today in India, it i unfashionable to talk about an agricultural constraint and the current catc words are liberalisation and export led growth. It is of considerable impor tance to understand why this is so.

Probably the most important reason why agricultural growth is n longer seen to be a binding constraint is because India now has very larg and growing stocks of cereals. Despite the fact that per-capita foodgrain consumption is now no higher than what it was in the early sixties, th current 'problems' are not of food shortages and food imports but of foo subsidies and food stocks. Simultaneously, manufacturing growth, whic decelerated sharply in the mid sixties, continues to be sluggish. Large part of industry are suffering from chronic excess capacity because domesti demand is inadequate and because exports are unprofitable given techno logy, product mix and the structure of costs and incentives. Export sub sidies have increased greatly recently, but the current emphasis is o 'modernisation'. By this has meant either the importation of new technolog in old industries with a view to becoming internationally competitive, or more usually, the importation of techniques to produce new goods fo which domestic demand exists or can be created. Quite clearly, it ca plausibly be suggested that the economy is currently in the throes of generalised demand problem in both existing industry and agriculture ; an it is this which explains both why agricultural growth is not perceived t be a constraint and why export growth is seen to be a solution.

This identification of a generalised demand crisis should not be inter preted to mean that there are no sectors where supply is short. Despit considerable improvement in the situation in recent years, there is still a shortage in the energy sector. Also, the 'glut' in agriculture relates almos wholly to cereals and mainly to wheat. There are serious shortages in oilseeds, pulses and certain other agricultural products including timber and forest produce. This reflects a growing imbalance in Indian agriculture which started with the fact that the green revolution was mainly in wheat and this was further compounded both by its regional concentration and by the government policy to provide price support almost exclusively to cereals Also, the present pattern of regionally concentrated agricultural growth has meant that fertilizer requirements per unit of marginal output are very high and this is another area where domestic capacity is short of domestic consumption. Thus, to a large extent it is possible to claim that agriculture, other than cereals, still presents effective supply constraints. Nonetheless, it is fair to talk of a general demand crisis, partly because of the sheer weight of sectors where demand is a problem, and partly becaus

goods which are both essential and lack domestic supply sources have, of late, been a declining proportion of the import bill. The very fact that a larger and larger proportion of imports today consists of those goods, mainly capital and intermediate, for which close (though may be somewhat outdated) domestic substitutes exist and have excess capacity shows that at least in the opinion of the market (or the government) the really scarce goods are not that scarce after all.

If, therefore, we do accept that a generalised demand crisis exists, we need to know why ? One argument often put forward is that the demand constraint exists simply because income distribution is very skewed and/or worsening. And, the solution suggested is that of massive transfers to the poor through, say, 'food for work' programmes Certainly, worsening income distribution has been an important factor in the demand problem. Indeed, I have myself suggested in the previous section that the large food-grain stocks imply and are implied by such a worsening in distribution. What is less clear is whether transfers to the poor would solve the demand problem in industry. In my earlier work, I had run a simulation where the 11 m tons of foodgrain stocks in 1975-76 were run down to 3m tons by means of income transfers to the bottom 40 percent of the rural population. The result was only a 3 percent increase in manufacturing output as compared to an over 15 percent increase if the stock reduction was accomplished by increasing investment demand. Food stocks are, of course, larger today and one would get a higher figure with redistributive transfers but the point remains that such redistributions tend to have a small effect on industrial demand and, indeed this could pull down the growth rate if, indeed, it is agriculture constrained. This raises a rather more important point : if the agriculture constrained growth rate declines with redistributions to the poor, can generalised demand problems ever arise in such a setting. My answer is not only that it can, but also that in an important sense it is endemic in a market economy.[12]

Generalised demand crises, and particularly excessive stocks of agricultural goods, are not only consistent with the economy being agriculture constrained but that these are indeed the most likely outcomes if the government moves to a private investment regime but is simultaneously interested in preventing continous deterioration of agriculture's terms of trade and uses support prices to this end. Few in India would fail to recognize that this has, in fact, been the trend in policy since the end of the Third Plan and many have identified deceleration in public investment to be the main cause of recessions. But it is still not fully appreciated that in order to explain demand crises we have to also explain the even more dismal growth rate of private investment and that the hypothesis of an operative agriculture constraint scores on almost all points.

Clearly, there is a very strong case for increasing public investment substantially. This would perform a demand management role; additionally such investment is also required critically to develop infrastructure heavy

industry, and, in the long run, to increase the rate of agricultural growth The problems of inflation discussed above are associated with this course of action The events of 1965-67 proved that taut planning could lead to politically unacceptable cost if unaccompanied by a credible domestic provision for food security. In this sense some food stocks are clearly necessary. But current levels are all most certainly too high, and it is difficult to explain why the government has not expanded investment more unless this is linked to the budgetary consequences and hence to some kind of influence of monetary growth on inflation. This is where I see the role of speculation and idle cash balances, but all that is really needed is that the government believes, whether correctly or not, that higher deficits are inflationary.

Given the actual government fiscal and monetary stance and the consequent problems of demand, agriculture has not been the main source of inflation after 1975 In my opinion, the main source of inflation in the last decade has been the increasing rupee prices of imported goods, particularly oil and other universal intermediates. This would be seen to cause both inflation and a movement of terms of trade against agriculture. It would also be contractionary. It is sometimes claimed that imports are too small a proportion of GDP to explain domestic inflation in India, but this clearly depends on the degree of indexation. As we have already observed, the degree of indexation of organized sector wages seems to have increased greatly after 1975 and, to the extent, that target support prices are based to some extent on prices paid by farmers, there is some, though far from full, degree of indexation also in the determination of agricultural prices. Taken together, these would seem large enough to explain most of recent inflation in terms of rupee import prices. The reaction of the government to these external price shocks has, generally been to cut investment. But this only adds contraction to inflation.

The alternatives to contraction are either to impose wage-price freeze on the non-agricultural real incomes at a given output level, or to simply allow the inflation to continue and make what necessary adjustments are required. The first option, although widely applied in other countries, would have fairly serious political and administrative problems in India. To this extent it is not a very credible option. As far as the second is concerned the major problem lies in the balance of payment implications, the rise in the domestic price level will, ceteris-paribus, lead to increased non competitiveness of domestic products vis-a-vis the foreign, and thereby to a deterioration of the trade balance. Any subsequent price decline which may occur, say, with the recovery of agricultural output does not in itself solve the problem since the non-agricultural prices would have settled at a permanently higher level. As a result, financing the increased trade gap by drawing down resources or by foreign borrowings is at best a temporaray measure. The usually suggested remedy is to devalue the currency, but even this has problems. The rise in the domestic price of imports caused by a devaluation will simply add to the stagflationary effects, and hence may

make matters even worse. What is needed clearly, is some method by which the price received by exporters is raised without raising import costs, in short, some form of dual exchange rate.

Critical Issues and Critical Choices: A Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried to examine the major trends in the Indian economy in the seventies and early eighties— i.e. after the serious commitment to national planning ended. I have tried to discuss both long run and short run issues but have concentrated mainly on the latter partly because the period has seen one shock after another and partly because I feel that short-run issues sometimes tend to get ignored by those of us who would defend planning and therefore want to take a long run view. In this concluding section, I shall try to rectify this 'short sightedness' not by stating long run priorities but also by a policy proposal which I think is important for providing the essential link between the long and the short of policy.

To most of us in India the economic scene in the last twenty years appears turbulent, and to at least some of us the policy shifts during the period also appear to have been haphazard, shortsighted and sometimes simply wrong. However, what strikes most outsiders to be really remarkable is not this, but rather that India has avoided the hyperinflations, the debt crises or the major 'adjustment' recessions that plague so many developing countries particularly in Latin America.

But what does it mean to be resilient ? Surely not that its debts are relatively low, because, till very recently, India's international creditworthiness was such that it simply could not contract very high international debts even if it tried to. The 'resilience' lies in the fact that India was able to adjust to the oil price shocks without a hyper-inflationary spiral even though it did not get the sort of balance of payments support that other countries did. The main reason why this was so is structural. The Indian economy is more monetised than the average developing country, and simultaneously, very large sections of it have almost no indexation. As a result, inflationary shocks are heavily damped, with the costs borne largely by wage earners in the unorganised sectors. In the case of the oil shock, moreover, inflation was accompanied also by a large movement in the terms of trade against agriculture because the monopolistic industry could pass on the increased costs. The outcome of these happening simultaneously were the large income redistributions and these in turn led to the demand problem—a classic case where external price inflation very quickly turns contractionary. This structural feature which avoids hyperinflation (and the subsequent 'adjustment' recession) does, however, have a very high cost in terms of equity. And this cost is probably no less than in the 'high-drama' Latin American type situations and may even be larger because a greater burden tends to fall on the poor.

This asymmetrical burden-sharing extends to a number of policy instruments that have been strongly recommended to India over the past

few years. Of these, specific mention must be made of two. First, the oft-repeated exhortations to raise the administered prices of a number of 'basic' goods, either for revenue raising reasons or for bringing them "in line with international prices", stem from a rather optimistic view of the relative costs of adjustment and of passing the burden to the major user of these goods, i.e., the organised sector. Secondly, the transition to a tariff-based system from a quota-based one, in order to expose the domestic economy more fully to international conditions, also opens up a similar possibility. This is because adjustment to balance of payments shocks with constant tariff rates through currency devaluation would necessarily mean a greater rise in the price of 'universal intermediates' than in the present situation where increases in quota premia of capital or specific intermediate goods do much of the adjustment. In both these cases, the equity effect would be similar to that of the oil price shock. And, it is not at all clear that there would be any real efficiency gains from either policy, especially if account is taken of two factors. First, that such policies can actually increase distortions when different degrees of indexation exist in the organised and unorganised sectors. Second, in the specific context of an agriculture constraint, the effect may be to reduce agriculture growth, and this would overshadow any marginal allocative gains. A far better alternative, if world prices are to be used at all, through either administered prices or import policy, is to move towards a system where all primary goods and 'universal' intermediates have a fixed effective exchange rate and all capital goods and specific intermediates have another and flexible effective exchange rate—with the latter bearing the burden of shocks, and also raising revenues.

Although the policy regime outlined above may seem most unorthodox, it is merely a more logically consistent variant of the system that is currently in place. Its consistency lies, first in that it is likely to be more effective than present policy in increasing manufactured exports. Secondly, in that the longer run considerations of growth and equity are firmly embedded in the policy options that the government chooses to allow itself in times of internal or external shocks, in contrast to the somewhat ad-hoc 'crisis management' type of behaviour that has characterised the recent past. Moreover, it is not at all clear that this regime unambiguously reduces the flexibility of government policy interventions. If it is accepted that needlessly contractionary monetary or fiscal policies should be eschewed because of their certain negative equity effects and doubtful allocative effects, much greater flexibility in and targeting of public investments becomes necessary. The proposed system facilitates such decisions, first by being more sensitive to world conditions, and second by ensuring that domestic shocks are borne more by the sectors which can afford to do so without jeopardising the creation of the socially necessary 'universal' intermediates, particularly infrastructure.

Unfortunately, many of the suggestions made above run contrary

to the most basic tenets of the multilateral aid agencies, whose views are formulated in models which are essentially savings-constrained. While their powers to enforce their own views on an existing system are limited to occasional nudges during moments of crisis, any attempt at a thorough rationalisation of the existing system *within its own terms*, as this proposal represents, can and will be strenuously resisted. It is, however, important that a policy regime which has demonstrated in part its inherent virtues be allowed to continue without some of its sharp edges and idiosyncracies, before radical alterations are called for.

1. See Bhagwati, J.N. and T.N. Srinivasan, *Foreign Trade Regimes and Economic Development : India*, Columbia University Press 1975.
2. Politically, this episode was marked by the loss of the ruling Congress Party of over half the state governments in the elections of 1967. Apart from Kerala in 1956, the Congress had never lost a state election upto them
3. Unofficially, it is known that the Planning Commission adjusts for the fact that N.S.S, estimates of consumption are usually lower than that obtained by the C.S.O. by multiplying all N.S.S. figures for a common adjustment factor. However, the C.S.O. estimates as given in the National Accounts themselves imply that there have been large re-distributive effects and, hence, use of a common adjustment factor is inconsistent, and lowers the estimate of poverty.
4. For statewise levels and growth of per-capita agricultural output we have relied on the Reserve Bank of India's Report of the Committee on Agricultural Productivity in India. For price data, see P. Sen · Stablization, Income Distributions and Poverty : India, ICRIER Discussion paper No. 2 and N. Rath's Presidential Address to the Indian Agricultural Economic Association Conference 1985
5. This is true for per-worker real Incomes even if we take into account, as we strictly should, that the shift of labour from agriculture to unorganised non-agriculture involved a shift from a lower to higher income/worker sector. However, since participation rates rose somewhat during this period, there was a small (about 0.2% per annum) growth in the real income per capita of the unorganised sector as a whole.
6. To this must be added the worsening regional distribution of agricultural income.
7. See. P. Sen *op cit.*
8. The Corroborative evidence consists of data on rural wages and employment and certain other scattered micro-studies too numerous to be individually cited.
9. This is cancluded from data in National Accounts statistics Profits, include interest, rent and depreciation.
10. A. Sen : The Agrarian Constraint to Economic Development—the case of India. Unpublished Ph D. thesis, Univercity of Cambridge, U.K.
11. It needs to be made clear that the case where the 'foreign exchange' constraint bites is not the only one where the balance of trade identity holds. This, of course, holds in all three cases. However, in both the agriculture and foreign exchange constrained cases, optimality requires that there be no 'competitive'

imports, the prescence of such imports distinguish the avisngs constrained case from the other two. The distinction between the foreign exchange constrained and the agricultural constrained cases rests on whether agriculture should optimally grow at the exogenously given maximum feasible rate or not. If it should, the agriculture constraint b tes, if not, the foreign exchange constraint operates.

12. A simple mathematical model demonstrating this argument which had been included in the original version of the paper, in left out here for expositional convenience. Readers interested in following the argument are requested to consult the original paper which I can make available.

*TIRTHANKAR ROY**

Share of Industrial Wages in Value-Added 1960 to 1980

THE OCCURENCE of major industry-wide strikes in the first few years of the eighties testifies to the processes of change that the organised industrial labour market as a whole seems to be going through. Unlike the early seventies, labour unrest is far less localised now, regionally or industry-wise. Relative incidence of industrial disputes is also increasing, gradually but steadily. These facts can be partially understood by analysing trends in the distribution of industrial income which is characterised by a long-term declining tendency in the share of workers. What makes distributional questions of additional significance is the current context of relaxation of control over private capital, privatisation of the manufacturing sector and growing emphasis on technical innovations that are likely to reduce rates of labour absorption in industry. How the expected increase in productivity is going to be shared becomes a pertinent question Although concrete policy statements on labour in the present regime are lacking, we can at least review the performance in this regard in the preceding two decades.

Wage share was a subject of considerable interest until the early 1970s, but few studies have appeared since then.[1] The present paper, besides updating the statistics, extends the analysis in three respects. Firstly, it recognises that the labour market in India is regionally fragmented. Trends in wage-share, therefore, must be studied with state or region as the unit. Because of limited integration, statewise trends in wage-share, insofar as they reflect changes in the relative bargaining power of labour, are likely to influence industrial location This whole question of the implications of a certain trend in wage-share on basic entrepreneurial decisions was hardly touched in the earlier literature. Locational changes as one of the usual reactions to changes in labour market structure is a possibility of considerable theoretical interest. Specifically, it implies a basic constraint on the effectiveness of organisation.

Finally, the paper places particular emphasis on bargaining and labour market structure as opposed to capital intensity of technology, as explanations for wage-share trends. A strong positive statistical correla-

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tion between wage-share and capital intensity has been the basis for a technological explanation of wage-share levels. The technology (or labour productivity) bias persisted in the wage-structure literature of the 1970s. This bias can be criticized. One can question the reduction of historical characteristics of a labour force to simple and directly measurable indices. One can recall Kaldor's remark that in the indstrialized countries, stability in wage-share obtained 'despite the phenomenal changes in the technology of production'. Finally, rarely can the two effects, bargaining and technology, be as clearly distinguished as is made out in the statistical literature. To the extent the two can be treated as autonomous, the former has been underestimated through unsound methodology. One of the objectives of the paper would be to isolate as far as possible the effects of pure organisation, without having recourse to quantifying unionism, etc., and to understand its specific impact on wage-share, modifying or intensifying the impact of increasing mechanisation.

The first part of the study presents basic statistics on aggregate and statewise wage-share and the second part analyses inter-industry differences. The last section explores the possible implications of trends in wage-share on location decisions on the one hand and the frequency of intervention on the part of labour on the other.

Trends In Wages Share

Within that segment of the organised sector represented by the ASI (Census sector),[2] the share of wages in value added has been steadily decreasing since 1960 (Table I) In this respect there is a continuity, since 1949 at least, of the tendency noted and analysed by the earlier studies on wages-share and trends in real wages. From 53 percent in 1949, the ratio fell to 41 percent in 19'5 hovered around that level for next 5 years when, a second phase of decline started. This second phase has continued although the aggregate ratio seems to be more stable during the 1970s. The statewise pattern, however deviates greatly from the aggregate.

A fall in the proportion of 'workers' in total work-force contributed to the long trend, but only modestly. Proportion of workers came down from 85 per cent in 1959 to 78 percent in 1979 in the country as a whole. But the statewise picture was just the reverse of that in wage-share, i.e., the proportion of wage-earners in total employment declined to a much lesser extent and more slowly in those very states where wage-share had fallen the most (Punjab-Haryana, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, etc.).

On the whole decline has been universal across states, with Bihar and West Bengal as the only significant exceptions. However, the timing and extent of the decline vary. In Punjab-Haryana, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra the trend has remained more or less unbroken whereas in Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Andhra sharp reversals have occured. In Kerala, on the other hand, the ratio came down only during the latter part of the period. What is of significance is that the list includes several states

Table I : *Shares of Wages and Salaries in value added*

(Percentage)

	Wages					Salaries				
	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980
Punjab-Haryana	41.3	29.4	27.0	24.0	21.0	12.0	12.8	19.0	14.6	17.1
Karnataka	33.1	28.0	24.0	29.0	31.8	15.2	13.7	15.0	22.7	21.2
Gujarat	45.7	41.7	36.0	35.0	32.1	9.1	11.7	14.3	15.9	15.4
Tamil Nadu	36.9	36.1	34.0	36.0	32.1	8.2	13.4	16.8	22 4	16.0
Maharashtra	39.8	35.2	31.0	30 0	28.1	8.9	15.7	21.8	19.4	18.7
Andhra Pradesh	40.3	36 9	32.0	26.0	31.9	17.2	15.1	18.9	21.8	18.8
Uttar Pradesh	42.0	37.9	34.0	36.0	43.3	10.4	11.4	14.8	21.7	19.5
Bihai	40 0	32.4	36 0	33.0	50.7	16 4	13.9	23.0	17.4	25.2
Kerala	34.1	35 2	34 0	31 0	28.9	10 4	12.3	16.8	23.8	14.0
Wes. Bengai	40.4	39.8	49.0	48.0	48.2	14.3	17.1	25.2	24.0	19.7
All India	39.6	36.4	35 0	34.0	33.6	10 7	15.0	19.4	20.7	18.1

Note : Wages and Salaries do not include employers' contributions and money value of benefits except for 1970 and 1975 when value of benefits is included in salaries.

which have industrialised especially rapidly in the post-independence peri(i.e., in which the growth of a large scale industrial labour market is matter of the relatively recent past. Another point of some interest is th the range between the highest and the lowest values of the wage share rat has widened over time. This observation will be referred to again below.

Components

Shetty's calculations showed that in the first phase of the decline was the profit component which increased relatively, from 35 per cent 1949 to 44 percent in 1960. Salaries were constant at 11 percent and mon value of benefits increased from 1 to 3 per cent. In the 1960s however, t picture changed considerably. The pure salary component started increasi from 1962 63 onwards and levelled off at around 19 to 20 percent after t late 1960s. Value of benefits was practically constant in this phase. And too were profits which steadied at 44 to 46 per cent for nearly two decade Exceptional were the few years that marked the beginning of a decad long industrial stagnation. But while the rate of industrial growth recorde a sharp decline in the mid-1960s, profit-share in value added fell bare 1 or 2 percent below the long run average. In fact in several states increased all through the 1960s. Profit-share in active units, in oth words, was scarcely affected by the crisis implying that either the wage ra and increments in it or employment itself could be easily adjusted to t tendencies in value-added growth This is a point to which we shall retu to below.

The basic tendency can be clarified by placing it in the context of pr duction. The following identity is derived from the profit and loss accoun

Value of Output or Sales (O) = Wage bill (W) + Profits and Salaries (P) + Value of Inputs (I

$$\text{Or, } I/O + (W+P)/O = 1$$

Any change in the first term must be balanced by compensato change in the second. Thus, if I/O is increasing,(W+P)/O must decrease proportion. We define the profit margin as profits over sales and assun that a major objective of the producers is to maintain the profit margin prevent it from falling. It would follow that W/P or W/V must fall, whe V stands for distributable output or net value added. Depending on th composition of inputs used, there can be two interpretations of a rising I rates and by implication, of a fall in wage-share.

Assuming that the intensity of exploitation of labour is unchangin mechanization would raise constant capital and reduce variable capit components in total cost. Assuming also that the limits of existing techno logy have not been reached, and competition among producers is withi controllable dimensions, this would at the same time raise the profit margi and reduce wage-share in costs and value-added. Measuring the correlatio between degree of mechanisation over time (through changes in capita labour ratio) and worker's share is beset with technical difficulties, but th

statistical studies which could overcome some of these found the relation to be weak.[3]

The empirical index, I, however, includes raw material costs which would be far less affected by mechanization than components like depreciation, energy inputs, etc. If a rise in I relative to value of output simply reflects rise in material prices, its implications for profitability would be necessarily adverse In that case, intensity of exploitation must increase so as to compensate for rising material costs. The impetus would be especially strong since material prices in India, to a large extent, are exogenously decided. This is so because of the influence on industrial prices of agricultural prices and intersectoral terms-of trade, of prices of imported materials and the significant public sector component in the intermediate goods and raw material producing sectors.

Assuming, therefore, that prices of material input apear as exogeeous variables, increase in the material input components establishes certain logical necessity for wage-share to fall (See Table II). The vidence indicates that in practice the depression in wage-share gave rofit margins the required stability only in the 1960. Since 1970, ie profits margin has been steadily falling apparently owing to the chaustion of the possibility of depressing wages further. Of course, the ossibility that deliberately inflated material prices or depreciation conceal part of profits cannot be ruled out. A study of cost-streeture from ASI or 'om company accounts would necessarily involve detailed adjustments for

Table II Components of Value of Output

(Percentage)

	I/O	W/O	I/W	P/O
1960	72.6	11.0	6.6	16.4
1965	73.6	9.9	7.7	16.4
1970	75.3	8.6	8.6	16.2
1975	76.9	7.6	9.8	15.5
1980	79.1	7.9	11.3	13.0

iventories and for changing and ambiguous definition of some of the ems A preliminary look at the data would reveal that the share of net iput cost in value of output has gone up from about 68 percent in 1960 nearly 75 percent in 1980. Net input cost consists of, in addition to curent purchase of materials, withdrawal from stocks, energy inputs, services onnected with material purchase and other unspecified minor items.

Although not identical in actual composition, I/W is similar in interretation to Kalecki's average material cost-wage cost ratio Since a secular end in wage-share is at issue, predictions regarding cyclical movements in ie ratio are not applicable in this case. Nor does recognising its imporince as a factor in the determination of wages-share make theoretical

explanation easier because the state of empirical knowledge about the behaviour of material prices and its constituents is far from complete. We may also note in passing the relationship that emerges from the data between profitability and overall industrial growth rates. Profitability did not decrease at all during the industrial stagnation of the mid-sixties, but fell in the late 1970s when actually industrial growth rates have improved.

Decomposition of Wage-share

Wage-share can be expressed as the product of two micro-level indices, the ratio of wage rate to productivity per manhour and the ratio of manhours per worker. If the wage-productivity index is written as

$$W/p = \frac{W/N}{V/M} \quad \text{where } N = \text{number of workers}$$

$$M = \text{manhours worked}$$

$$\text{then wage-share } \left(\frac{W}{V}\right) = \frac{W/p}{\text{hours per worker}}$$

It is reasonable to assume that conscious action by workers or producers would be largely guided by and directly influence the rates of wages and productivity, rather than wage-share as such. The wage-productivity index may also influence bargaining through demand for wage-productivity parity. For simplicity, changes in the ratio resulting mainly from movements in p will be attributed to increasing mechanization alone. The second term, hours per worker, contains important information about the conditions of employment. It is a measure of the capacity to raise absolute surplus value assuming that any increase in the ratio would usually include an 'unpaid' element.

The following index numbers show that in the 1960s, the wage-productivity ratio and hours per worker contributed equally to the fall in wage share. But in the 1970s, reversal in the latter cancelled out a further fall in the wage productivity ratio. Assuming that the wage-productivity ratio

		w/p	*hours per worker*	*wage-share*
Average of	1959—61	100.0	100.0	100 0
	1969—71	93.8	107.0	87.7
	1979—80	88.8	101.5	87.4

primarily reflects increasing capital-intensity (since increasing p contributed more to the decline), the long term impact of mechanization on wage-share was negative throughout, but reinforced by the intensity of exploitation in the 1960s and neutralised by it in the next decade. The meaning of a rising hours per worker in terms of actual work-practices remains to be clarified[4]. Account needs to be taken of inter industry and intersize variations also. Neither will be attempted here.

Incremental Wage-share

Wage share can be defined in dynamic terms measuring the workers' capacity to claim and acquire a certain portion of the incremental value added over a relatively long period. In symbols this measure would be $\Delta W/\Delta V$. In this sense, bargaining strength will be neither increasing nor decreasing if ΔW maintains a close correspondence with ΔV. Obviously, this situation is consistent with a decreasing wage share. Since the denominator reflects industrial growth directly, the principal advantage of using incremental share is in the possibility of relating industrial growth to wage-increments.

Neither in tendency nor in level the incremental ratio seems to have behaved essentially differently from W/V itself (Table III). The changes in the

Table III : *Incremental Wage-Share Index*

(Percentages)

State	Periods 1960-61	1965-70	1970-75	1975-79
Punjab-Haryana	27	29	20	22
Karnataka	26	24	33	28
Gujarat	36	32	21	33
Tamil Nadu	37	34	28	32
Andhra Pradesh	35	24	25	31
Maharashtra	33	21	24	32
Uttar Pradesh	34	15	34	52
Bihar	35	55	19	8
Kerala	43	29	29	5
West Bengal	42	05	41	62
All India	36	31	26	36

ratio between one period and another are probably somewhat more sharp. If these movements are ignored, and attention is restricted to the two end-points, it would appear that the incremental wage-share has remained more or less the same, unlike W/V.

But the movements themselves make a significant point. Take 1965-70 for instance, when the incremental ratio almost uniformly declined. This was a period when ΔV had fallen very much below the previous standards (from 97 per cent in 1960-65 to 65 in 1965-70). This drop in ΔV was a universal feature, but especially true of the eastern states, Bihar and West Bengal. How did ΔW respond to this change? In the eastern states it did not move correspondingly and behaved as if it contained a predominant overhead content. Perhaps this can be understood in terms of the significant share of the public sector in these two states, especially Bihar. But everywhere else, wages grew *even more slowly* than value added. The

slower growth continued in the next period even as $\triangle V$ improved by mo than a third. In short, it was as if wages were flexible downwards, accor ing as the value-added situation demand it, and inflexible upwards. T some extent, the mid-seventies saw a reversal of this tendency.

So far we have been concerned with temporal changes in wage-share. The question has been, do wage increments maintain parity with growth in value added ? What principally interested the earlier contributors to this literature was the cross sectional counterpart of this question, namely the interindustry differentials in wage share. This has its specific advantages. Data across industries lend themselves to the drawing of concrete inferences about the wage determination process, and in particular about the association between wage-share and capital intensity, because interindustry differences in capital intensity or employment conditions are more easily grasped and measured than are their changes over time. As already mentioned, the association was found to be strong and positive in the wage-share and wage-structure literature of the seventies. Section II contains a fresh look at the data which suggests that this correspondence cannot be unambiguously established.

Inter Industry Comparison

To begin with, the correct interpretation of a high cross-section correlation is not immediately clear. Take for instance, the commonplace distinction between 'traditional' and 'modern' industries. The term 'traditional' is used in two senses, technologically of a lower order and historically prior. The latter is an important feature because it sometimes implies a labour force more experienced in organizing, itself such as that exists in the textiles. As for wage share both features, and not just the first, predict an upward bias in the case of traditional industries.

Secondly, the correlation may not turn out to be very high if only the broad industry-groups are selected for comparison (Table IV). Within the highest capital intensity groups (basic metals, chemicals, paper, rubber, other engineering and minerals, in that order), wage share in basic metals and engineering was relatively high in 1959. Within the least capital intensive industries the share could be quite low, as in food and textile products. In respect of tendency, except chemicals and engineering, the share has gone up, if moderately, in all the six capital intensive industry groups whereas it has declined in textiles as a whole.

The conclusion must be that while the purely technical effects of changes in industry-mix or technology are easily predictable, the labour market implications are not. That there would be a labour market implication is obvious enough. Firstly, labour intensity or average size of a unit in terms of labour will not be neutral with regard to organisation possibilities. Thus, within the traditional sector wage-share can be fairly low in industries dominated by small scale units such as rice mills, flour mills, vegetable oils, dairy products, and so on. Secondly, different industries

Table IV : *Wage share by Major Industry group*

(Percentage)

Industry	Year		
	1959	1969	1971
Food, Beverages, Tobacco	21.6	24.4	33.3
Cotton Textiles	59.0	58.0	48.0
Jute Textiles	51.0	70.0	55.0
Other Textiles	37.5	32.0	33.4
Paper Products	32 0	35.0	34.0
Rubber Products	21.0	28.0	25.0
Chemicals	19.0	19.0	19.0
Mineral Products	32 0	34 0	34.0
Basic Metals	33.0	41.0	38.0
Othe Engineering	44.6	41.6	32.5
All Industries	37.0	35.0	33.0

have different histories and organizational structures. The relatively high wage share in basic metals surely has something to do with its significant public sector component. A longer past need not always imply more militant organisation. The historical conditions in particular can be specific to regions and entrepreneurship. For instance, the low wage-share in chemicals can be partly associated with its initial concentration in Gujarat, traditionally known for low incidence of labour trouble.

Interconnections between industrial structure and regional features is an interesting question. A particular result of Table IV is relevant in this context. Note that the range between the highest and the lowest values of the wage share has been decreasing over time, especially if the erratically behaving jute textiles is excluded. Earlier we had seen that in interregional variatians quite the opposite thing is happening, the range is increasing. Locational changes can account for both. Movements of a wide range of industries towards low wage regions can bring down the inter-industry differentials while at the same time accentuating the regional specificities. Such broad locational changes have occurred in engineering and cotton textiles in the 1970s, away from West Bengal and Maharashtra into Punjab-Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Karnataka.

The wage-structure literature also indicated decreasing correlation between capital intensity and wage-share at the micro level. The actual correlation is between ranks of labour productivity and wage-rate across industries, calculated on the basis of different industry samples. The level of the coefficients vary widely from one study to another, though on the

whole there is weak indication of a fall in the coefficient in the sixties. we compare the situation in two more recent time-points with that in tl early sixties, this becomes especially clear.[5]

	r
1960	0.83
1964	0.73
1969	0.39
1974	0.34

If the raw data are closely examined, it would become apparent th this tendency was largely a result of discrepancies between wage rate an productivity within the traditional sector.

Implications of Wage Share Trends

Do apparently unrestricted possibilities of depressing relative laboı costs encourage investment ? Investment decisions as such would be to complex to admit of simple correlations. But as suggested above, locatior decisions (regional industrial growth differentials are assumed to reflec locational trends) are likely to be sensitive to wage share. We have teste this association through two types of relations : change (decrease) in th state wage-share ratio between t and (t+5) and state industrial growth rat in the same period (A) ; and the size of the ratio at t and growth rate over t to (t+5) (8).[6] The latter relation tests whether or not producers worry about the precise division of income into relative shares. The first measures the importance attached to the expectations of a continued decrease in the ratio. Two growth rates are considered, output and employment. Where they differ, the interpretation should be that the employment-intensive industries behave differently. We then have four different relationships. computed for four sets of sub-periods (Table V)

Table V : *Coefficients of Rank Correlation between Industrial Growth Rates and Wage-share across States*

		t		
	1960	1965	1969	1974
A : Output	0.51	0.38	0.50	0.33
Employment	0.27	0.23	—0.08	0.12
B : Output	—0.11	0.22	0.11	0.33
Employment	0.25	0.43	0.55	0.25

On the whole, industrial growth differentials in output seem to be more sensitive to *changes* in wage-share and the relationship operates without the lag postulated. Employment, however, depends more on the *levels* of wage-share. Nevertheless, both the models corroborate that the most significant locational adjustments occurred within the decade 1965 to 1974. This is significant, for what we know about the period—the intensity of

labour-unrest, the novel techniques of intervention employed by labour and producers' bitter reactions to that—make the late-sixties rather special. Output, as we have noticed, is insensitive to levels in wage-share with the exception of the late 1970s. This somewhat greater response of growth differentials to levels of wage-share is implied by our earlier finding that the range between the actual ratios has gone up over time.

These correlation results do establish a prima facie case that capital mobility has been associated with tendencies in the local labour markets. These tendencies probably became sharply articulated in the 1960s when the rate of industrial growth was subdued. Regional differentiation in the labour market ensured that the possibility of depressing relative labour cost as growth rates fell were not uniform. Locational changes followed, in industries which could be otherwise highly mobile such as metal-based or textile industries, mainly from the bigger enclaves to the recently industrialized regions. Predictably, these movements have slowed down in the more recent years with a similar slowdown in wage-share tendencies.

Disputes

So far wage-share has been treated as a passive variable. It is far from so in advanced capitalist countries where, 'whenever statistics have shown a slight decline in the wage-share in national income, labour leaders have pressed for higher wages to restore the position'. Although the

Table VI : *Workers in Dispute as a Proportion of Total Employment*

(Percentage)

State	Year				
	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980
Punjab-Haryana	0.4	0.6	12.4	1.4	5.3
Karnataka	5.5	9.3	6.5	2.7	11.9
Gujarat	0.5	0.9	5.8	1.4	6.2
Tamil Nadu	18.5	—	11.4	12.1	16.0
Andhra Pradesh	4.4	2.8	6.2	3.9	8.7
Maharashtra	18.5	17.3	14.5	5.3	8.4
Uttar Pradesh	1.7	2.8	5.6	2.5	4.7
Bihar	2.8	1.7	8.3	6.2	5.6
Kerala	39.9	25.2	11.4	3.1	5.2
West Bengal	9.1	6.7	22.2	16.7	14.8
All India	8.0	6.4	10.5	5.8	8.3

Source : *Indian Labour Year Book* and *Employment Review*

labour market in India is essentially fragmented and a bilateral mo
situation in bargaining rarely obtains even within a single industry, a
term and fairly universal fall in wage-share in income should have at
an indirect influence on wage-bargaining. What we are postulating
rising tendency in industrial disputes sometime towards the end o
twenty-year period. Taking workers involved in disputes as a propor
of total organised sector employment to be the index, we observe that
has indeed happened, though the break in trend cannot be very preci
located (Table VI). The tendency however, appears clear only if we m
an allowance for the repression of the emergency. The long-term tren
especially noticeable in the case of Punjab-Haryana, Gujarat, And
Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. This is a significant result becaus
are recently industrialised states in which wage-share has decreased sha
between 1960 and 1975.

1. Kanta Ranadive, 'Wage-share in Organized Manufacturing Industries in I 1946-57'. *Artha Vijnaua,* December 1961 ; M.M. Dadi, *Income Share of Fa Labour in India,* New Delhi, 1973 and S.L. Shetty, 'Trends in Wages and Sal and Profits of the Private Corporate Sector', *Economic and Political We* October 13, 1973. See also the industrial wage-structure literature of the se ties. Bakul Dhalakia, C K. Johri and N C. Agarwal, Deepak Lal, P.C. Ve P.K. Sawhney, T.S. Papola, *et. al.* contributed on this theme mainly in *In Journal of Industrial Relations* and *Indian Journal of Labour Economics.* concerns were prominent in Ranadive's study, cyclical behaviour of the share influence of shifts in industrial composition on wage-share. A 'contracycl tendency was found to operate but underlying the short-term changes, a sec trend could be identified especially after 1952. Structural shifts were inde significant influence on the aggregate wage-share, but according to her, 'the w share would have declined even with an uncharged industrial composition'. I carried out tests of correlation between capital—labour ratio, based on estim of capital stock adjusted for age-composition, strength of labour organisat skill-mix and wageshare. Capital-labour ratio was found significant for acr iudustry differentials in wage-share, levels but not for differentials in tempo changes in the share.
2. The census sector of ASI represents about 80 per cent of total employmer registered factories. Its coverage extends to a substantial part of the regist small-scale factories as officially defined. Data on the unregistered manufa ring sector are available from the National Accounts but prevalence of househ enterprises in this sector makes it difficult to unambiguously define 'wages' 'wageshare'. If these difficulties are ignored, wage-share has declined in unregistered sector as well and the trend has remained unbroken. See P Brahmananda, 'Economic Theory and labour Economics', Presidential Addr at the 26th Indian Labour Economics Conference, Mysore, 1986.
3. M.M. Dadi, *op. cit.*

4. Average length of shifts being legally fixed, increase in 'unpaid' hours per worker can imply reduction in the number of paid holidays, average absenteeism, average duration of rest-periods or employment of workers with inferior rights such as 'budli'.
5. 1960 and 1964 figures are from Dholakia, *op. cit.*
6. Growth rates are from Tirthrnkar Roy, 'Interstate Variations in Industrial Growth in India, 1960 to 1979-80' M Phil dissertion of the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, 1984.

(A shorter version of the paper was presented at the 27th Indian Labour Economics Conference at Mysore, April 1986)

The Circle of Reason

AMITAV GHOSH, *The Circle of Reason*, Hamish Hamilton, Rolli Books, Rs. 49

SOMETIMES from a double-decker bus you could see a whole refugee bustee encircled by gun-toting C R.P. uniforms. It was simply another day in Calcutta of the early 70s, There were also evenings when your elders told you of *sonar bangla,* of a wealth of fish and land which dissolved in the nightmare of riots, war and exile. And the story continues, enfolding in everyday sights and headlines : the Nellie Massacre, burnt houses which once belonged to Sikhs in Delhi, labour contractors leading a flock of rural poor from Orissa to Kashmir, proposals for a boundry wall on the Bangladesh border...... The history of our sub-continent, especially of its northern part, has never been able to take its continuities and culture for granted. A life of constant movement and violence has incessantly serrated our roots.

It is not often that we choose to acknowledge the restlessness of our lives. When we do, as in Attia Hosain's *Sunlight On A Br ken Column,* it is seen simply as a dislocation from a settled childhood. Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason* presents a much more enigmatic appreciation. It combines within itself an uncompromising restlessness with a poise and control that suggests peace rather than longing. This is remarkable, for really *The Circle* offers nothing which it can call home. Initially located in a refugee village, the story refers back to Bangladesh and Calcutta, finally moving to the Middle East via Kerala where it reaches its denouement in a desert of shifting sand-dunes. And all the while it travels through environments which are never entirely rural or urban. Nor do its ideas provide a stable attitude. Each idea evolves from the story, posing a challenge to the preceding one and is itself qualified by a succeeding understanding. Even a basic element like Time, is not uniformly patterned. *The Circle* is an epic of restlessness. And yet, the calm...

Science, philosophy, history, politics, culture, art, language, the joy of living, the despair of repeated loss—these are only some of the strands which make the scope of this novel fairly formidable. And like a conjurer, its restless energy provides at each moment and at all levels, a fresh disclosure. The level of the story, for instance. The novel provides not one, but many stories, each equally appealing and important.

Basically there are three stories knitted around three characters. The first part unfolds the story of Balaram, a nationalist entranced by the *Life*

of Pasteur. His obsessive idealism leads him to treat people as objects either of observation or of change ; a trait which makes him self-destructive as he gets entangled with his alter ego, Bhudev, a Congressman, who though motivated by cynical considerations looks at people in the same way as Balaram. The second part revolves around Zindi, the earthy, practical, zestful trader whose presence brings together a community of Indians in the Middle East. The second part moves forward through Alu, the nephew and only survivor of Balaram's family. He brings this community to death and destruction by his attempts to create a co-operative community which tries to dispense with money and trade Finally, the third part structures itself around Mrs. Verma who in defiance of all rational scepticism, creates in the desert an oasis of Indian community life. The novel, however, moves on as Alu, Zindi and Jyoti Das (a police officer who follows Alu from the first part, having taken him for an extremist) finally leave Mrs. Verma and the desert, bound for destinations which are to be discovered through hope. The main source of continuity is the story of Alu and Das, which is structured on the thriller format, and talks of a relationship which, being based on officialdom and power, cannot acknowledge its human connections.

A large part of the pleasure in reading this novel is the immense fertility and zest with which it tells stories. While the bare outlines sketched above move over continents, an infinite number of stories ranging back and forth in time are clustered around it. *The Circle* is specifically a contemporary work. One of the main sources of the freshness of writers like Marquez and Losa is their genius for story-telling, a facility that has created new possibilities for the novel, while making serious reading a pleasurable, accessible and popular experience again.

The way Ghosh tells stories, makes story-telling itself a way of looking at the world. By letting his stories interplay with time for instance, Ghosh achieves a fairly original synthesis of two different concepts of time. Generally novelists tend to stick either to a chronological narrative or dissolve time into a kind of duration where past and present are indistinguishable. Ghosh chooses to engage in a different, more subtle adventure The novel starts in the past with Balaram's excitement at exploring the shape of Alu's skull, moves further back in time to Balaram with his friends, all in their mid-thirties, returns to Balaram's relationship with Alu, moves forward to the present with Inspector Das interviewing Gopal, a friend of Balaram's, and then slips back to the beginnings of Balaram's life and career in Presidency College. Each story unfolds in linear time Much like the phases in a raga each maintains its distinctiveness And like a raga, the theme and concerns of the novelist weave them together in a single flowing texture Each story, whether it moves backwards or forwards in time, continues and explicates the previous one. The final experience is an extraordinary achievement in which past and present co-exist while constantly asserting their difference.

But Ghosh does not rest here. In fact *The Circle* does not have a single conception of time. Or rather, it explores the many possibilities offered by the general idea of time. In the second section Ghosh traces a different relationship between the past and present. This shift has nothing gratuitous about it, for the difference flows from the thematic design. In keeping with the tone of vibrant and spontaneous involvement with living (exemplified in Zindi), the distinction between the past and present is emphasized in the second part. While offering the Damanhouri story as a possible interpretation of the star episode, Abu Fazl never loses sight of the fact that the tale he tells is from the past. On the other hand, presisely because the first part is built around Balaram who belongs to the part, the aspect of co-existing time dominates to bring this whole section close to the structure of memory.

The story does not stop even here. A delicate network weaves connections between different phenomena, and removes any claims to absolute autonomy which they may generate. While the overall design patterns time, in its turn the arrangement of time moulds history. *The Circle* presents history as a collective memory embodying a symbiotic relationship between past and present. The past, a reference point for understanding what is happening now, is equally dependent on the present which determines how we look at it. Dantu, Balaram's friend, a secondary character in the first part, surfaces again as Hem Narain Mathur, a crucial presence in the third section, for the immediate concerns of this part demand a greater attention to his history. The mobility with which history traverses past and present is indeed due to the fluid pattern of time ; yet time, with the poise and flavour of oral recapitulation coupled with chronological references, never lets us forget that history is situated in the past.

The perception of history evolves from the novel, and Ghosh never attempts to bulldoze history into some other preoccupation. History retains its historicity, as a process which hinges on characters who are representative of important historical tendencies—whether it is Balaram the idealist Bhadralok, or Bhudev the lumpen Congressman who unnervingly talks of mass media and straight lines, or even Damanhouri the one-eyed fantasy of the fledgeling bourgeoisie. What does happen, however, is that history is refracted through different mediums : in the first part, through ideas on science and change, and in the second section, through the Damanhouri story, as a narrative from which earthy lessons are to be drawn. The difference in historical understanding corresponds to the distinction between an intellectually cosmopolitan culture and a more rural one. Being memory, history is fashioned by the way people collectively look at their inheritance. It is subject to culture.

What we have here is a novel that organizes by exploring connections, distinctions and possibilities, rather than putting everything together in a symmetrical design. Each aspect of *The Circle* is gathered into a process of constant change. And despite its formidable array of interests,

it never stumbles into chaos. Everything is seen in relationship, both internally and with other areas, being dependent finally on the way the novelist looks at life. The balance *The Circle* achieves through this, creates also an original possibility for the novel itself. By disallowing absolutes, Ghosh is able to break free from the constraints of conventional realism. At the same time, because of the ability to acknowledge the separateness of each area of life, it does not suffer from the introspective formation that marks many a modernist novel. *The Circle* flourishes in the new space opened up by writers like Marquez, where the style organises by synthesising collectively acknowledged categories of reality with the logic and me ta phors of the artist's imagination. But it is not enough to say that Ghosh follows in the wake of these writers. His novel also creates a new avenue, one which is less lyricised, more responsive to the specificity and multifacedness of experience while evincing an increasing intellectual curiosity about the life it unfolds. It is this style which provides a rest in the swirling restlessness and violence that pervade the theme and action of the novel : if there is a home, it is to be found in the way we perceive and relate to our world. The calm that is affirmed here, has within it a great deal of humanism, for through it *The Circle* is able to avoid the obsession with fragmentation and helplessness that has gripped so much of western art.

Equally important is its immediate relevance. The novel has made its appearance at a time when our country seems to be headed towards one of the goriest chapters of its restless existence. Already the battle lines are being drawn. On the one hand the discontinuities within our heritage are increasingly being interpreted as negations of any linkages within that tradition. On the other hand the dominant tradition is coming to regard itself as the only legitimate source of our complex culture. The alternatives recall the memory of two terrible possibilities : 1947 and Biafra. The importance of *The Circle* lies in living another process, one which suggests that any relationship must encompass both similarity and difference, and to acknowledge this, given our immediate challenges, would be to explore and create a wholeness immeasurably richer than any narrow nationalist cliche.

Ultimately of course, the seriousness of Ghosh's understanding springs from the fact that it is not 'easily' acquired. *The Circle* takes a lot of beating, tracing a repeated pattern of achievement and loss. In all three parts the novel finds patches of settled community life. Each part is a tale of attempts to better society, efforts (except, with qualifications, the last section) which flame into destruction and exile. Yet the novel does not slip into cynicism. The way it looks at its stories ensures that the urge to mould a better life remains undefeated. The style of *The Circle*, the location of its 'home', also gives it hope.

This hope is important. For *The Circle* leads us into an universe which is spectacularly destructive. Even a suicide burns down fifty houses. And Ghosh [illegible] these events as 'literary'

metaphors. The whole novel *lives* this large, metaphoric existence. Th characters—whether it is Balaram with his carbolic acid, or Zindi franticall trying to buy a shop—become metaphoric by the sheer intensity of thei obsessions. The metaphor then is not a matter of presentation ; it arti culates the urgency, which the vulnerability of human understanding an life, generate in the novel. The fate of whole cultures is involved. Th flames of the known world which Alu looks on at the the end of part one are also the flames of positivism, which dominated not merely wester but a great deal of international thought. The importance of the issue involved make the metaphors in *The Circle* a grim prophecy.

However, the novel is too assertive of life to make the kind of state ment which says that the fate of humanity is inevitable. Its prophec warns rather than dictates. By displaying life lived at its fullest, it alway communicates a sense of alternate possibilities. And in an age that ha got accustomed to the prospect of annhilation, this is no small achieve ment. Nor is it easy to grasp the centrality of human choice, which itsel assumes that many choices are possible. It liberates the relentless logic o Balaram's actions from any sense of fatalism, and makes it a humanisti protest against the myopia of idealistic convictions. For Balaram's inhuma nity is inherent in the way he looks at people. By denying people thei status as living beings, Balaram has already courted death. Yet the inten sity of Balaram's beliefs and the love with which Ghosh draws hi character, makes his destructive absurdities so human. The novel speak again of the old tragic anguish, of the fullness of human life and th blindness that destroys it. But then *The Circle* is also an epic novel Though Balaram's death may be an important moment, it is, after all, onl a moment in the course of the novel. Unlike Golding and a host o western authors, Ghosh is able to avoid fetishising destruction. It is not death which gives meaning to life. On the contrary, by showing life as a journey larger than death, *The Circle* makes death find its identity in the horror and sadness which embalms this process.

The vision of life as a process transforms the restless world of this novel. Restlessness loses its meaning as displacement or instability. It becomes, in Ghosh's hands, a dynamic urge to find a complete relationship with the rich diversity of our world, which is achieved in the organisation of the novel. The position, however, can never be final, for by acknow ledging the supremacy of life, it has to subject itself to the rush of expe rience. The world of cotton—spinning, for instance—is initially projected as an alternate ethos to Balaram's universe epitomised in phrenology. Cotton brings together language, art, work, love, giving its practioners a lively connection with the world. And yet it is pathetic, for the world to which it belonged is gone. Unable to comprehend the new violent world, the language of jamdani dissolves into commerce and destruction until all that is left are Alu's ten fingers to serve as a reminder of what was pos-

sible, and a hope that this possibility would be the basis of a fresh, comprehensive language.

The many achievements of the novel make the last part somewhat disappointing. It fails to live the earlier fullness of experience. There is something forced here; the meticulous detail with which the deserts of Arabia are Indianized gives the feeling that a thesis is being imposed In any case, in the light of what had been done, is the search for an obvious resolution necessary ? True, the novel leaves Mrs. Verma behind. But the fact remains that she is not questioned at all. By centering the last section on a clear-cut confrontation between Dr. Mishra, the cynical nationalist, and Mrs Verma, the organic innovator, Ghosh seems to deliberately schematize the structure, so that Mrs. Verma is glorified at the expense of her rival. It is not then, as if Mrs. Verma's life is simply one of the many possibilities offered in the novel. It has a larger significance, one that is made to hold hopes of regeneration.

The seriousness of Mrs. Verma's depiction also poses serious problems for the approach of the novel. Clustered around it is a danger and a silence which vitiates much of the wholeness of the novel. The danger lies in the way Mrs. Verma self-consciously creates an oasis of Hindu culture. In a multi-religious and multi cultural country like ours, this does seem a brittle short-cut home. For while the obvious point is that religion cannot be completely severed from culture, the equally important and more interesting problem is to approach the process evolving from the relationship between different cultures. Continuities must be found in the present, and not only recovered from the past. Otherwise Mrs. Verma's efforts, especially at a time when communalism beckons threateningly, can easily be construed as an expression of Hindu zeal. More so, because it leaves a silent space which can only be filled by the denseness of uncritical belief. This area itself is formed by the tangential view of social change. Mrs. Verma's idea of change rests on a personal recovery of tradition, rather than on making society as a whole more human, a problem which was raised through both Balaram and Alu. Their answers may have been flawed, but the questions they raised, remain. What does one do with the cynicism of Bhudev, or the inhuman on rush of colonialism shown so vividly in the Damanhour story ? No doubt, Ghosh has made an effort to tackle the problem though the figure of Hem Mathur. But the thematic relationship between Mrs. Verma and her Lohiaite father does not seem convincing; nor does the celebration of Mathur, whose qualities concern personal integrity and proximity to the oppressed, fully challenge the problem.

However, it is not as if the third section denies altogether possibilties created in the preceding portion. Ghosh is far too talented a writer to leave us with less than an ambigious effect, even at his weakest. Despite the liveliness, intelligence poignancy and zest for affirmation in the third part, the problems remain serious precisely because of the importance of the novel as

whole. And they are not problems with easy solutions, for they are yet to : resolved by our understanding, action and process of living. In brief it is iis : the problem of human survival has become dependent on finding the)nnection between a full conception of relationship and of social change. he problems of our country are also what we share with the rest of the orld. For the growing internationalisation of the world has, by throwing ifferent cultures and societies together, emphasized their distinctions. How an we prevent these distinctions from becoming antagonistic to a point of o return ? And can this be done by simply appreciating distinctions, or oes it need a different social perception, which proceeds not by exclusion, ut dialectically ? *The Circle* provides a problem, a hope and a direction. Need we expect more from a work of art ?

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Editorial Note

SOME TIME ago we had expressed our intention of taking up the agrarian question for deeper study in the pages of the journal. In keeping with this intention, we devote the current number of *Social Scientist* exclusively to a discussion of capitalist transition in agriculture.

The overall transformation of a society in the direction of capitalism, as is well-known, need not entail an immediate, parallel development towards a preponderance of capitalist (i.e., wage labour-based) farming in agriculture. Lenin had noted this phenomenon for the United States. But whether it is the U.S. or France or Japan, agriculture in advanced capitalist countries is far from being characterised by the exclusive preponderance of wage-based cultivation and this situation is not even likely to change in the near future. This however does not mean that agriculture in the countries remains partly *pre-capitalist* in any meaningful sense of the term. Rather, as Terry Byres argues in the lead article, agrarian transition within the overall context of capitalist transformation of society can take diverse forms. Capitalist transition in agriculture must not be understood narrowly to imply exclusively a transition to the capitalist *form* of cultivation; rather, it should be understood in the somewhat broader sense of entailing a transformation of the agricultural sector in a manner which subserves the overall capitalist transformation of society. The precise form of the agrarian transformation has varied from case to case, depending upon the precise historical context and the class-configuration obtaining therein. Classical Marxist discussions of the subject have focussed attention on two particular variants of this transformation : the Prussian and the American paths. But, the author feels, it would be entirely in the tradition of Lenin's analysis to extend the comparative method, so richly and fruitfully employed by him, to distinguish between several alternative variants. He accordingly discusses the form that this transition took in a number of different cases, England, France, U.S., Prussia and Japan, bringing out the specificities in each case, and locating them within the overall context of capitalist transformation in each situation.

Utsa Patnaik's paper is based on another important insight of Lenin, namely that developments in agriculture are often obscured by an incorrect aggregation of data, which permits the drawing of a host of neo-populist and anti-Marxist conclusions, e.g., the superiority of petty-pro-

duction over large scale production, the absence of any systema tendency towards differentiation within the peasantry, etc. She uses t extent to which outside labour is used relative to family labour, or t extent to which family labour works for others as the criterion for grou ing cultivating households into categories such as landlords, rich peasan middle peasants, and poor peasants. Employing this criterion for clas fication, derived from Lenin's tradition as against the usual official class cation according to acreage groups, to primary data collected fr Haryana, she obtains a set of striking results, from the statistics : inp used as well as outputs obtained per acre increase noticeably with cla status ; marketed output as a proportion of total output also increa with class-status ; the Green Revolution technology is unevenly distribu across classes ; and only the labour-hiring classes obtain surpluses wh all the others register deficits. These results strongly question the valid of neo-populist conclusions abut the superiority of petty-producti Since a prevalent explanation of such alleged superiority is the suppose lower production per acre in *labour-hiring* farms, her results constitut *direct* refutation of such hypotheses.

Growing differentiation within cultivating households is also theme of Atiur Rahman's paper. Using a variety of data, from second sources as well as from field surveys conducted by himself, the aut underscores not only the extent of differentiation which exists in Ban desh, but also the fact that this differentiation has been increasing ; w is more, this differentiation appears to have been increasing at a fa pace in areas which have acquired some "Green Revolution" technol With a process of dispossession of the poor and enlargement of the holdings underway, efforts at characterising of Bangladesh society being in a "quasi-stable equilibrium" lack any factual basis. The populist view of a stable peasantry cannot derive any sustenance from experience of Bangladesh.

We hope the papers presented in this number will stimulate w ranging discussion on the agrarian question and the processes of tra tion. We shall try and publish more on these themes in our con numbers.

*T. J. BYRES**

The Agrarian Question, Forms of Capitalist Agrarian Transition and the State : An Essay With Reference to Asia

> Of course, infinitely diverse combinations of elements of this or that type of capitalist evolution are possible, and only hopeless pedants could set about solving the peculiar and complex problems arising merely by quoting this or that opinion of Marx about a different historical epoch.
>
> (*Lenin*, 1964a : 33)

> In the effort to understand the history of a specific country a comparative perspective can lead to asking very useful and sometimes new questions. There are further advantages. Comparisons can serve as a rough negative check on accepted historical explanations. And a comparative approach may lead to new historical generalizations.
>
> (*Barrington Moore*, 1967 : xiii)

Terrain to be Covered and Preliminary Observations

THE GUIDING principle of this workshop is the belief that careful use of the comparative method can illuminate the nature of agrarian transformation in the poor countries of Asia. That is a principle to which I strongly subscribe. This paper is an attempted exercise in the comparative method.

The paper is pursued within the framework of Marxist political economy. The comparative method is not, of course, confined to a political economy approach. It can be fruitfully deployed within any of the available paradigms. It is, however, my view that it is at its most powerful when pursued in political economy terms.

My concern is with the agrarian question and the possible manner of its resolution in certain Asian countries in which a capitalist path is being attempted. It is thus that I interpret 'agrarian transformation'. Successful 'agrarian transformation' I read as successful 'capitalist agrarian transition'. I will define the relevant terms—'agrarian question' and 'agrarian transition'—carefully in section II. They have several layers, of

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meaning, all of them important. Let me here indicate the very *broad* sense of 'agrarian transition' which I will maintain.

By 'agrarian transition' I understand those changes in the countryside necessary to the *overall* development of capitalism or of socialism, and to the ultimate dominance of either of those modes of production in a particular national social formation. That is a deliberately broad reading. It is, however, the one which I find most useful. Space precludes treatment of socialism in this paper. My concern is with the capitalist path. That, in all conscience, is demanding enough.

My aim is to explore some of the differing forms—differing not in a trivial or epiphenomenal, but in a substantive, sense—that capitalism may take in the countryside in Asia (socialism, too, will take differing forms, but that I do not consider). In so proceeding, I take the logic or the 'laws' of capitalist development, which must be explored theoretically, as primary (and would proceed similarly if treating attempted socialist development). It is within that overall logic, or those 'laws', that differences are pursued.

In a properly comprehensive treatment, I would, also, contest the possibility of a 'third', or 'populist' path, which is held to be neither capitalist nor socialist. Space precludes that, too (for some of the relevant arguments see [*Byres*, 1979]).

I would stress that no attempt is made to secure a fully comprehensive analysis of all Asian countries. That degree of detail and mastery of individual cases are well beyond the scope of a single paper.

Thus, for example, consideration of the countries of Western Asia/the Middle East is not attempted. Nor is full coverage of other regions of Asia essayed. Rather, my aim is to consider the broad alternative paths of capitalist transition that have been attempted by, and have been suggested for Asian countries. The treatment is rooted in a consideration of the actual experience of those Asian countries which have secured a successful capitalist agrarian transition : and which have been especially influential, therefore, in the realm of prescription. These happen to be in East Asia. I shall try to suggest what *general* lessons, if any, might be drawn from such experience. Even this more limited endeavour is sufficiently daunting.

The exposition will involve reference, also, to some non-Asian countries, from whose apparent history influential models have been abstracted. These models are influential in the present context, in as much as certain crucial interventions have been made, both in the colonial past and in the post-colonial era, in conformity with them; and to the extent that Asian realities are sometimes judged against them. No analysis of the agrarian question can be complete without this component. In my observations here, I shall try, in whatever small compass, to identify the *actual* broad contours of capitalist agrarian transition, as these emerge from the work of historians. These may differ in certain important respects from elements of the model that has been in use in the past and which may

still be in use : elements sanctified by usage may be difficult to dislodge.

This latter exercise has the effect of revealing more diversity of historical experience than is always acknowledged. Treatment of the Asian countries, both in the pre-Second World War era and in the post-colonial epoch, extends that picture of diversity. One of the arguments of this paper is, indeed, the need to recognise and to come to terms with substantive diversity.

It is worth commenting on the chosen units of comparison. For present purposes, these are nation states, or, in political economy terms, national social formations (the existence of sub-national or regional social formations being of importance, especially in large nation states). Marxist discussion of the agrarian question has always proceeded in such terms. There are, indeed, strong reasons for so proceeding. Modern nation states do each have a unity which invites comparison at that level.[1]

In the attempted capitalist case, that unity derives from several sources.[2] One is the existence of dominant classes, with a common set of interests, which operate at a national level. One such set of interests is given by the existence, increasingly, of national markets : product markets, capital markets, labour markets. Dominant classes, indeed, have a common opposition to subordinate classes, which may operate at supra-regional levels. A second source of unity is the nature of the state and its activities. The state acts on behalf of dominant classes, often at a national level; it is usually involved in some form of national planning, which, however ineffective, does reinforce national priorities; its fiscal efforts are national in scope and have a unifying influence; its creation and operation of a public sector straddle regional influences; it controls subordinate classes, and where they threaten class-for-itself action, perhaps on a national scale, it may move decisively against them;it takes steps,sometimes apparently at variance with the interests of dominant classes, to keep the whole social formation from bursting asunder, and this may underpin the unity of the nation state. These influences operate as much with respect to the agrarian question and agrarian transition as in other spheres.

We note the centrality of class analysis to the political economy approach. An understanding of the agrarian question and of the differing forms that transition may take depends critically upon class analysis. We note, also, that part of the concern of this paper is with the nature and activity of the state in relation to the agrarian question and agrarian transition. That, too, is crucial to understanding the relevant issues. I would stress that the state is *not* the paper's major preoccupation. It is impossible, however, to consider the relevant issues without reference to the state.

It is necessary, however, to stress the desirability of employing the comparative method *within* nation states. This is especially so for large nation states, like India (or China, were we considering the attempted socialist case). Within such states substantive diversity exists (although

this may be true, also, of smaller national social formations). Thu: *would submit, there is a sense in which, the postulated unity notwithsta ding, it may be as unilluminating to proceed in terms of the* agrari question in, say, India (or China), as it would have been so to conceive *the* agrarian question in Europe in the late nineteenth century. One ca of course, define the agrarian question in general terms. At one leve then, there may well have been *an* agrarian question in Europe. Bu at the heart of Marxist writing on the agrarian question in the late nin teenth and early twentieth centuries was, precisely, an attempt to identi the relevant diversity. To that I shall come. In India (and in China as in Europe of that epoch, there are several agrarian questions. It important to capture that diversity. That, I feel sure, has not yet bee done rigorously. I will not be able to consider it below, but it does nee adequate treatment.

Attached to a 'comparative' approach, carelessly and crudel employed, are dangers of an insidious kind. These include, firstly, th positing of general 'lessons' from individual 'success' stories where no suc general lesson exists; and, secondly, the extraction of a 'model' fror apparent success which ignores critical features of the relevant experience The specific country approach, carefully pursued, should permit one t guard against such practice. It is an attempt to take account of thes dangers, in the context of agrarian transformation in Asia, that has prom pted this paper. If any conclusions that emerge are more cautionary thar they are possessed of any startling new insight, that, nevertheless, may be salutary.

The Agrarian Question and Agrarian Transitions

(a) Economic Backwardness, the Agrarian Question, and a Broadening of Meaning.

Of all the issues which a political economy of poor countries must confront, perhaps the most important, the most challenging, and the least tractable, is the agrarian question. A central distinguishing characteristic of economic backwardness is an unresolved agrarian question. This unites the poor countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, whatever the broad means—be they capitalism, socialism, or populism—by which a passage away from economic backwardness is sought. The *general* notion of an agrarian question has relevance to the whole spectrum of poor countries, although its particular meaning will vary with the broad means of escape from economic backwardness which is chosen.

My concern here is with the agrarian question where *capitalism* is being attempted. In each of its specific manifestations, in this context, the agrarian question reflects and defines a continuing economic backwardness. But the *precise* form taken by the agrarian question is capable of great and substantive variety, and needs to be investigated most carefully, and

'openly', in different concrete situations.

An *understanding* of economic backwardness requires a firm grasp of what constitutes the agrarian question. A coherent notion of what is involved in the *eradication* of economic backwardness must derive, in part, from some comprehension of what the resolution of the agrarian question entails. In this section, I explore the meanings which attach to the notion of an agrarian question and the manner in which these have developed historically. It is within those meanings, generally conceived and structured by the relevant theory, that the variety will be considered.

From this exploration it emerges, indeed, that, from the very outset, part of the agrarian question has been seen to be the diversity of possible agrarian transitions—or resolutions of the agrarian question – that exists. As capitalism has developed, however, in different social formations, the range of substantive diversity has been seen to widen. I will wish to :plore the nature of these different agrarian transitions in subsequent :ctions, with contemporary Asia in mind.

It is to be stressed that this is not an easy terrain On the contrary, is treacherous and full of dangerous pitfalls. It is to be negotiated with ire.

Our point of departure is to ask : what *is* the agrarian question ? The otion of an agrarian question has its origins in the concerns of European larxists in the late nineteenth century. At that time, it bore a narrower onnotation than it currently does. It is from that relatively narrow, beit extremely important, sense of the agrarian question that our present sage has developed. It is instructive to trace the gradual broadening of ieaning. We start with the late nineteenth century.

(b) The Engels View : The Agrarian Question As An Explicitly Political Issue.

When, at the end of the nineteenth century, European Marxists ivestigated and debated the agrarian question, that formulation derived om an explicitly political concern. Those early Marxists were preoccupied with the problem of how to capture political power in European ountries in which capitalism was developing apace, but had not yet, as it 'as expected ultimately to do, swept all before it in the countryside.

They had in mind a particular model of capitalist development in griculture : against which the European experience was being judged, and which European development was expected, ultimately (and sooner ather than later), to conform. This particular form of agrarian transition 'as that treated by Marx in *Capital*. It was based upon the apparent xperience of English agriculture, and had as its outcome the dominance, n the countryside, of the capitalist farmer/wage labourer relationship. I ill return to the English experience, or 'English path', in section 3. Marx's eatment of it has exercised immense influence upon analysis of the grarian question in those contemporary poor countries—not least those

in Asia—in which a capitalist path is being attempted.

Capitalism, quite clearly, had not yet rooted out and destroyed, as a serious force, non-capitalist social relations; had not yet replaced them, as the overwhelming agrarian reality, with that stark opposition of capitalist farmer and wage labour that the logic of *Capital* suggested as inevitable in the longer-run, as a result of the operation of 'the economic law of motion of modern society'. Had capitalism done its work in that way and to that degree, a strategy similar to that pursued in urban areas, and geared to the rural proletariat, would have been suggested. But it had not. There was, then, an agrarian question.

Capitalism and, therefore, socialist/Marxist parties, were still confronted by the substantial presence of the old mode of production : that is to say, by continuing economic backwardness. For the Marxist theoreticians and strategists of the late nineteenth century, the agrarian question derived from the political problem of how to capture power in countries which continued to have large peasantries. Engels, indeed, highlighted this when he referred, in one of the classsic Marxist texts of that era, not to the 'agrarian guestion' but to the 'peasant question' (his 'The Peasant Question in France and Germany' [*Engels*, 1970], written in 1894, the year before he died). The 'agrarian question' was, in essence, the 'peasant question'.

Marx and Engels had always stressed the political apathy of peasants: an apathy born, in part, of their objective, material circumstances. If capitalism swept them away, this would not constitute a problem for socialist parties. But it had not yet done so.

Peasantries remained, and, indeed, 'from Ireland to Sicily, from Andalusia to Russia and Bulgaria, the peasant is a very essential factor of the population, production and political power' (*op. cit.* p. 457). That being so, the successful pursuit of political power by socialist workers' parties required that they 'must first go from the towns to the country, must become a power in the countryside' (*op. cit*, p. 458). Central to that 'peasant question', and to the political difficulties it created, was the fact of peasantries which were differentiated, and, further, subject to influences that were hastening that differentiation. The agrarian/peasant question, then, became that of which sections or strata of the peasantry could be won over; and, in pursuit of this, the nature of the appeal, or agrarian programme, that should be formulated. These contentious issues could be addressed only via an adequate analysis of differentiation.

Capitalism had not eliminated peasantries, but by the 1890s the disruptive change being wrought by capitalism created new objective conditions, in which apathy might be less likely. Those new conditions were ones in which differentiation was proceeding apace, and in which class relationships were emerging far more clearly and sharply within the peasantry. Forty years had passed since Marx had written, in 1852, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, one of the few texts in which he had considered peasants and politics, and where he had pointed to the

political apathy of the French small-holding peasantry, and its failure to pursue class-for-itself activity [*Marx*, 1979]. The difficulties involved in winning over such peasants to the ranks of socialist workers' parties were massive.

When Engels wrote his 'The Peasant Question in France and Germany', the obstacles still appeared to him to be formidable. Capitalist intrusion in the countryside had brought considerable disruption, and the 'small peasant' was subject to great pressure, in France as in other European countries. The "small peasant' therefore, 'ought to lend a ready ear to socialist propaganda' [*Engels*, 1970 : 463] : ought by its changing material conditions, to be more liable to a class-for-itself position. Still however, in 1894, and despite disruptive change, the 'small peasant', who might be expected to listen to the arguments of socialist parties, 'is prevented from doing so for the time being by his deep-rooted sense of property' [*Engels*, 1970 : 460].

Engels was driven into the fray by his belief that socialist (i.e. Marxist/socialist) parties appeared to be succumbing to the powerful temptation to formulate 'agrarian programmes' in an opportunistic way : which simply glossed over the realities of the European countryside, in such a manner that they were ultimately non-socialist, or, even, anti-socialist. In the 1890s, 'the question of agriculture and the peasantry had become an object of discussion and political programmes not only in France and Germany but also in Belgium, Italy, Denmark and, of course, Russia' [*Hussain and Tribe*, 1981 : 1]. Engels had that broad context in mind. His article, however, was addressed, specifically, to the German socialists ; he had, as his immediate concern, the draft agrarian programmes of the 1894 Frankfurt Congress of Social Democrats , and he sought to prevent what he believed to be the errors of the French socialists in their agrarian programmes of Marseilles (1892) and Nantes (1894).

Engels stressed the continued existence of significant peasantries throughout Europe. The only two regions in which they had ceased to be of importance, he said, were Britain and Prussia east of the Elbe [*Engels*, 1970 : 457).

I shall have more to say about these instances in section 3. In each, the capitalist farmer/wage labourer relationship appeared to have become dominant in the countryside. But the *manner* in which this had happened—the nature of the path followed—was very different in the two cases. They represent significantly distinct forms of agrarian transition to a dominant capitalism in the countryside. Already, before the end of the nineteenth century, the possibility of substantive diversity was obvious. We must contemplate, that is to say, not agrarian transition, but agrarian transitions. Each—the 'English path' and the 'Prussian path'—has been influential in treatment of the agrarian question in contemporary poor countries. But substantive diversity, in the *form* of capitalist agrarian transition, only

starts with these two paths. Diversity, we shall see, has many other face to show.

The significant, European peasantries which were Engels' concern, h emphasised, 'consist[ed] of quite different parts which vary greatly with th various regions' (p. 458). The crucial issue was which of the 'subdivision of the rural population [could] be won over by the Social-Democrati Party ?' (p. 459). This, *in nuce*, was the agrarian question or the peasan question. The dilemma confronted in his intervention is one which, nearl a century later, continues to be faced in poor countries.

Space forbids consideration here of Engels' full argument, and, i particular, the manner in which he investigated differentiation (for a treat ment see [*Byres*, forthcoming]). We do, however, note that the issue discussed so trenchantly by Engels are ones with which any Marxist party operating in a contemporary poor country with a large peasantry would be only too familiar. Any agrarian programme, or strategy, devised by such a party would, if it were to be realistic, have to be based upon the most careful examination of its native peasantry, upon the exact extent and forms taken by differentiation, and upon a careful appraisal of regiona variety. Engels delineated one differentiation schema. Others are possible and likely, in situations different to those which he covered. It is important to remain as sensitive as possible to relevant differences.

The central theme of this paper is the importance of recognising and analysing the diversity of agrarian transition. In the devising of any agrarian programme or strategy, the dangers to be guarded against are those of mechanically applying a single model, or assuming that only one of a limited range of models, can be applied.

So much for the first rendering of the notion of an agrarian question: its explicitly *political* posing. It would soon gather new layers of meaning.

(c) The Kautsky-Lenin Rendering : The Agrarian Question and the Development of Capitalism in the Countryside.

Five years after the writing of Engels' article, there appeared, in 1899, in response to the importance of the issue in late nineteenth century Europe, two full-scale and remarkable Marxist analyses of the agrarian question : Kautsky's *Die Agrarfrage* [*Kautsky*, 1899] (see also [*Kautsky*, 1900] and [*Banaji*, 1976]) and Lenin's *Development of Capitalism in Russia* [*Lenin*, 1940 : chs. 1-5]. Each had great significance in the domain of Marxist theory, extending Marx's treatment of the development of capitalism in the countryside. Both had the considerable merit of pursuing their treatment of the agrarian question via careful empirical analysis (as, of course, had Marx himself, in *Capital*) : Kautsky considering data from Germany, France, Britain and the USA ; and Lenin's terrain being Russia.

Both Kautsky and Lenin were profoundly political in their concerns. Their decision to analyse the agrarian question in depth derived from the

rations which persuaded Engels to write his article. Now, however, :he agrarian question break into its component parts : a develop- hich was to bring a shift in meaning, as one of the component parts the intense focus of attention.

his is illustrated by the structure of Kautsky's book and the fate of ructure in subsequent translation and discourse. The book was into two parts : Part 1 on 'The Development of Agriculture in ist Society' and Part 2 on the Social-Democratic agrarian policy. In ench translation, which appeared in 1900, Part 2 was omitted. ient discussion of Kautsky's analysis of the agrarian question refers to it (an exception being the recent [*Hussain and Tribe*, :h. 4]).

his review of Kautsky's book, Lenin did discuss Kautsky's 'apply- results of his theoretical analysis to questions of agrarian policy' 1960 : 98]. That came towards the end of the review. But the focus was captured in the opening sentences of the review, where rote that : 'Kautsky's book is the most important event in present- onomic literature since the third volume of *Capital*. Until now n has lacked a systematic study of capitalism in agriculture. has filled this gap' [*Lenin*, 1960 : 94].

ow the agrarian question refers to the following : 'Why does the nent of capitalism proceed at a pace and take a form different iat of industry ? Why does the capitalist mode of production, the dominance attributed to it, coexist with precapitalist social of production ; and what is the effect of this coexistence on the ormation ?' [*Banaji*, 1976, Editorial Note : 1]. Kautsky's concern he extent to which capitalism has developed in the countryside, is that it takes, the barriers which may impede its development. idering of the agrarian question is now, in Marxist discourse, l from the more explicitly political sense used by Engels.

gels assumed that capitalism was sweeping all before it, but had completed its work in the countryside. Kautsky proceeded simi- t with close attention to the crucial differences between agriculture ufacturing industry. Lenin's problematic was somewhat different. ompelled, in response to the arguments of the *narodniks*, to address ion of whether capitalism *could*, in the particular circumstances of backwardness which existed in Russia, develop ; and to demons- t capitalism could and actually *was* developing in Russia.

ere is no discussion of agrarian programmes in *The Development lism in Russia*. Lenin was deeply concerned with and did discuss programmes at various places in his writings of this era : in, for his *The Agrarian Programme of Russian Social-Democracy* of ideed, he there refers to the agrarian question, in precisely the :d by Engels, as 'policy in relation to agriculture and the various

The agrarian question, as with Kautsky, retained its component parts. I these could now be discussed separately, and the major focus of attenti seems clearly to have become the issue of the development of capitali in economically backward countries : the problematic of *The Developm of Capitalism in Russia.*

In both Kautsky and Lenin, as with Engels, the agrarian questi was the peasant question. Lenin observed, in his *The Agrarian Program of Russians Social-Democracy* : 'if in the West the crux of the Social Den crats' agrarian programme is precisely the "peasant question" how mu more so must be the case in Russia' [*Lenin*, 1961 b : 109]. This was at t centre of the analysis of the development of capitalism. Capitalism, the extent that it was developing, had not eliminated peasantries as crucial social and political force. It had not completed its work of elin nating economic backwardness from the countryside. But, as Len stressed, 'the peasantry no longer constitutes an integral class' (*op. cit.*, 115). In both Kautsky and Lenin, the fact of a differentiated and diff rentiating peasantry was important. It looms large in Kautsky. It is at the very heart of Lenin's treatment For Lenin, it is the key to unde standing the nature of the agrarian question in Russia at the turn of tl century.

This Kautsky-Lenin sense of the agrarian question is the one whic is most widely accepted today, in those poor countries in which a capitali path is being attempted. It is the one which, for example, informs th wide-ranging debate which has taken place in India, on the nature of th mode of production in Indian agriculture (a debate to which there ar many contributions : usefully surveyed in [*Thorner*, 1982]), and simila debates elsewhere in poor countries (as, for example, in Latin Americ [*De Janvry*, 1981 : ch. 6], Turkey [*Seddon and Margulies*, 1984] etc.). That sense is concerned with the development of capitalism in agriculture The Russian Revolution was to force another sense : that of the agrarian ques- tion in the context of the attempt to build socialism in a backward economy. Another set of issues had to be confronted, though, again, one in which differentiation of the peasantry was central. This different set of issues would, also, suggest a further important connotation with respect to capitalist development. To this I will turn presently.

As with Engels, so space forbids consideration of Lenin's differentia- tion schema (for a brief treatment, including some comparisons with Engels, again see [*Byres*, forthcoming]). It is a schema, one need hardly say, that has been immensely influential in all subsequent analysis of the agrarian question.

Lenin's emphatic identifying of *social* differentiation, i.e. differen- tiation along clear class lines, was in direct opposition to the processes which *narodnik*, or populist, intellectuals saw at work in the Russian countryside. The views of those writers he explicitly countered in his book. They saw no class formation taking place within the peasantry.

and, therefore, no social differentiation and no development of capitalism. They saw the continuing reproduction of an archetypal, pristine peasantry, which might be the basis for successful 'development' in Russia : not *capitalist* development, but, one might say, development along a *populist* path. There would soon develop a new school of such scholars, with similar, but more sophisticated ideas, who would attempt to measure differentiation with refined techniques and using specially gathered data : a school who would eventually attract the description neo-populist. Their leader was A.V. Chayanov. In direct opposition to the Marxist (i.e., Lenin's) view of differentiation he posited a continuing process of *demographic* differentiation : differences between peasant farms there were, but these could be satisfactorily explained in terms of the demographic cycle [*Chayanov*, 1966]. There was no process of class formation, in the Marxist sense, taking place.

The debate between Lenin and Chayanov, or between those who embrace a position broadly similar to Lenin's and broadly similar to Chayanov's, has lost neither its relevance nor its force in relation to today's poor countries. The agrarian question thus posed continues to call for careful analysis, in differing concrete situations.

Lenin addressed, too, the issue pursued in this paper : that of the very different paths by which a transition to capitalism in the countryside might be traversed. He contrasted the Prussian path, Junker or landlord capitalism/'capitalism from above', and the American path, peasant capitalism/'capitalism from below' (see, for example, [*Lenin*, 1962 : 238-47] [*Lenin*, 1964 a : 32-33] [*Lenin*, 1963 : 135]) Indeed, for Lenin the agrarian question became, in part, which of these two paths should be followed in Russia. He clearly favoured the latter. The former would proceed slowly. It was also thoroughly reactionary. It called for 'wholesale, systematic, unbridled *violence* against the peasant masses and against the proletariat' *Lenin*, 1962 : 423]. The latter would not proceed painlessly. But 'capitalist development along such a path *should* proceed far more broadly, freely and swiftly' (*loc. cit.*). It required the abolition of landlordism.

Lenin was abundantly aware of diversity in the realm of the agrarian question and agrarian transition. He observed : 'Of course, infinitely diverse combinations of elements of this or that type of capitalist evolution are possible, and only hopeless pedants could set about solving the peculiar and complex problems arising merely by quoting this or that opinion of Marx about a different historical epoch' [*Lenin*, 1964 a : 33]. He was no pedant. He chose to concentrate on the Prussian and American paths in the context of Russia of his time, since he judged, after due deliberation, that these were the likely alternatives. He was probably right for Russia at that time. He did not, of course, at that juncture, contemplate socialist transformation.

We will see, however, that historical experience reveals great diversity in this respect : a diversity greater than that suggested by the three paths

of capitali t agrarian transition already identified—the English, Prussian, and the American—and which we will consider in the section. Part of my concern will be to examine the possible relevanc Asia of the paths of capitalist agrarian transitions already followed. Tl is no guarantee of successful transition. Historical diversity alerts however, to the possibility of yet different paths of capitalist transition.

We may now identify the third sense in which the agrarian quest can be seen. It is useful to proceed to that via mention of the agrai question and *socialist transition.*

(d) The Agrarian Question, Capitalist Industrialisation, and overall Capit Transformation.

The agrarian question in the context of the transition to socialism crucially important to any discussion of rural transformation in Asia. is not part of this paper's chosen, direct concern (for a recent treatment [*Saith*, 1985]). It does, however, have an important bearing upon problematic addressed here.

Socialist agrarian transition is usually seen by Marxists as a transiti ultimately, to some form of collectivised agriculture. The latter is the soc list equivalent of capitalist agriculture. There is scope for considera controversy over how quickly, by what means, and in what form it sho proceed, and what the conditions of its success are, in an economic backward country. That controversy is outside the scope of this paper.

One might comment, nevertheless, that the possibilities of diversity socialist agrarian transition, in this sense, are as great as in the capita case. Just as there are different paths of capitalist agrarian transiti (which it is the major purpose of this paper to explore), so we must alert to the possibility of different paths of socialist agrarian transiti (which it is equally compelling that we investigate). One notes, f example, crucial differences between the Soviet and the Chinese pat (revealingly explored in [*Nolan*, 1976] : no less important for the rece Chinese de-collectivisation of agriculture (on which see [*Nolan*, 198. another revealing treatment, though one in which the author has drama cally changed his view of the performance of Chinese collectivised agi culture). Nor does the Soviet-Chinese comparison exhaust possib diversity. The possibilities are, surely, many, The socialist experienc however, engages my attention here because it provided a new focus for tl agrarian question notion. That was a focus forced by harsh objecti circumstances.

We note that once the Kautsky-Lenin sense of the agrarian questio is detached from the initial Engels rendering, the way is open, with respec to the capitalist case, to a broader reading of the agrarian question. Tha way is pointed, initially, from the unlikely direction of socialist transition by the Soviet experience and the accompanying debates in the 1920s. Bu it is, most clearly, a way which proceeds from Marxist analysis of the

development of capitalism.

In the Soviet Union, in the aftermath of the revolution, the agrarian question imposed itself, very quickly and dramatically, in a distinct manner not limited to agriculture itself : i.e., not limited specifically to the development of socialism in agriculture, This new preoccupation derived, rather, from the needs of *overall* socialist transformation : needs dictated by profound difficulties in securing, on a sufficient scale, accumulation outside of agriculture, and in particular, the accumulation required by *socialist* Industrialisation. In an economically backward social formation dominated by agriculture, the countryside was cast as an essential source of surplus, for such accumulation. The agrarian question then became the degree to which agriculture could supply the necessary surplus, the means by which the fledgling socialist state might appropriate such surplus, and the speed and smoothness of transfer.

The new layer of meaning is now a central part of discourse on the agrarian question and the transition to socialism. It has also broadened, fruitfully, the notion of an agrarian question as that relates to capitalism. That broadening of meaning would have come anyway. It was hastened by the terms set in the Soviet Union in the 1920s.

The dilemma was stated by Preobrazhensky [*Preobrazhensky*, 1965 : 1. 2] to be that of *socialist* accumulation being unable to proceed from the utrient base of surplus created within the socialist economy. There there-ore had to be *primitive* socialist accumulation : based upon surplus derived om outside the socialist economy. Where agriculture both dominates the ocial formation and is not yet part of the socialist economy, this trans-tes into the agrarian question.

Collectivisation of agriculture, in both the Soviet Union and China, as, in significant measure, a response to this dilemma It was obviously ot exclusively so; and it was not necessarily contemplated as an immediate ossible solution by those who analysed the dilemma and wished to see resolved quickly (in the Soviet Union, for example, Preobrazhensky id not contemplate it : cf, [*Preobrazhensky*, 1965 : A. Nove's Introduction, v]). But it must, surely, be seen as in large part an attempt to resolve the grarian question, in this sense, by securing a speedy transition to socialist griculture. As this would be later put : 'It has been the socialist view that pre-industrial society could not mobilise its surplus effectively without ollectivisation of peasant farming [*Gurley and Shaw*, 1967 : 263]. The sues here are many, complex and contentious. There is certainly no uarantee that collectivisation will succeed in this respect, or in others. I bstract from all of this completely, since it is not my immediate concern or a brief treatment see, however, [*Byres*, forthcoming]).

In the development of capitalism context no significant attention had een given, hitherto, as part of the treatment of the agrarian question, to ie agrarian question, to the countryside's role in allowing accumulation to roceed outside of agriculture. Both Kautsky and Lenin were abundantly

aware of its significance with respect to capitalist industrialisation [*Kautsky*, 1900 : ch. 9] [*Banaji*, 1976 : 38-41] [*Lenin*, 1964a : chs. 1 and 2]. But it did not present itself to Marxist thinkers as being central to the agrarian question. That was a matter of the development of capitalism in the countryside.

One might, indeed, argue that it could be so subsumed, perfectly properly, under the development of capitalist agriculture : in as much as the problem is resolved by the full development of capitalism in the countryside. Then agrarian transition to capitalism ensures overall capitalist transformation, and a capitalist industrialisation based upon thoroughgoing *capitalist* accumulation : thereby solving the agrarian question in each of the senses discussed. This is the process envisaged by Marx in *Capital*, based upon his treatment of the English path, and by Kautsky and Lenin. It is one model to take to the treatment of contemporary, Asian poor countries.

One notes that inherent in it is a critical contradiction of interests-- between dominant rural classes (*capitalist* landlords and *capitalist* farmers) and the urban bourgeoisie in its various fractions (especially the manufacturing bourgeoisie, but also the commercial and financial fractions) : over the price of food and raw materials and of manufactures (the terms of trade problem), over relative taxation (the appropriation of surplus by the state), and over the net direction of surplus flows. This is of central significance to accumulation outside of agriculture, and the speed with which it may proceed. That struggle is mediated by the state, and full capitalist transformation requires the ultimate dominance of the urban bourgeoisie in the social formation. It may be long and drawn-out. But the struggle proceeds, in this model, within the domain of the capitalist mode of production, in as much as a transition to agrarian capitalism has taken place. The problematic is that of *capitalist* accumulation.

One might further argue that the agrarian question in the present sense can *only* be resolved with a full transition to capitalist agriculture: when the development of capitalism in agriculture has secured that mode of production's dominance in the countryside and the hegemony of capitalist production relations. That, however, is to ignore the important possibility that the agrarian question, in this sense, may be partly, and even fully, resolved, *without the dominance of capitalist relations of production in the countryside*. This is a possible route to overall capitalist transformation, in which capitalist industrialisation is permitted to proceed significantly. I would wish to categorise this as a form of agrarian transition : the securing of an agrarian structure which, although not itself capitalist in its relations of production, and not, therefore, in any useful sense, capitalist agriculture, nevertheless does not impede capitalist industrialisation and does not block overall capitalist transformation.

I will argue below that this can be shown to have happened in two crucial historical instances of successful capitalist development. It is part, indeed, of the diversity of capitalist transformation, and it is important

that we recognise this to be so.

Marx, of course, did analyse the countryside's role in allowing accumulation to proceed outside of agriculture, in his treatment of *primitive* accumulation [Marx, 1961 : Part VIII]. The contrast is here between primitive accumulation and *capitalist* accumulation.

It was to that treatment that Preobrazhensky reached when grappling with the problems of the new socialist state, in the Soviet Union of the 1920s. Marx stated the problem thus :

> . . . the accumulation of capital presupposes surplus-value ; surplus-value presupposes capitalistic production ; capitalistic production presupposes the preexistence of considerable masses of capital and of labour-power in the hands of producers of commodities. The whole movement, therefore, seems to turn in a vicious circle, out of which we can only get by supposing a primitive accumulation preceding capitalistic accumulation ; an accumulation not the result of the capitalist mode of production, but its starting-point [*Marx*, 1961 : 713].

This 'starting point' of capitalist accumulation capitalist accumulation which I am here specifying in terms of capitalist manufacturing industry - must last for so long as that accumulation needs to depend upon pre-capitalist sources of surplus : until 'capitalist production is once on its own legs' (*op. cit*, p. 714), in both industry and agriculture. Primitive accumulation, then, represents the *pre-history* of capitalist development : 'the pre-historic stage of capital and of the mode of production corresponding with it' (*op. cit.*, p. 715).

Marx went on to analyse, with his customary brilliance and incisiveness, the various key moments in primitive accumulation. We may permit ourselves a brief consideration of that, to clarify the argument I am putting.

Marx examined 'the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production (p. 715) : the process which created 'free labourers in the double sense that neither they themselves form part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, etc , nor do the means of production belong to them, as in the case of peasant-proprietors ; they are, therefore, free from, unencumbered by, any means of production of their own' (*loc. cit.*). So it was that labour-power could be bought and sold freely, by a process which ' "set free" the agricultural population as proletarians for manufacturing industry (*op. cit* p. 725). Here was a central feature of primitive accumulation : the creation of the conditions which allowed the emergence of an urban, as well as a rural, proletariat. At the heart of primitive accumulation were depeasantisation and proletarianisation.

Then, 'with the setting free of a part of the agricultural population, therefore, their former means of nourishment were also set free. [and] were now transformed into material elements of variable capital' (p. 745).

These had now to be bought. Agriculture supplied the crucial wage-goo food (and the terms upon which it was supplied would be critical Similarly, 'the raw materials of industry dependent upon home agı culture...were transformed into an element of constant capital' (p. 74((again, the terms of supply would be central). The union of agricultuı and rural domestic industry is irrevocably broken, and rural domesti industry is destroyed (*op. cit.*, pp. 748-9). So a new relationship, betwee capitalist manufacturing industry and capitalist agriculture, mediated b the market, is clearly forged.

Moreover, 'the events that transformed the small peasants into wag(labourers, and their means of subsistence and of labour into materi elements of capital, created, at the same time, a home market for the latteı (p. 747). Food and raw materials became commodities, and 'yarn, liner coarse woollen stuffs—things whose raw materials had been within the reac of every peasant family, had been spun and woven by it for its own use- were now transformed into articles of manufacture, to which the countr districts at once served as markets' (p. 747).

Marx envisaged this whole process of primitive accumulation givin rise, inevitably, to capitalist agriculture. With the full advent of capitalis agriculture, the pre-history of capitalist agriculture was over. What I am here positing is the possibility that successful capitalist industrialisatior can proceed by a continuing, or permanent, process of primitive accumulation, which may be part not of capitalism's pre-history, but of its developing history.

A fully-formed, dominant capitalist agriculture, i.e., one with clear capitalist relations of production—need not be the concomitant of successful capitalist industrialisation, and consequent overall capitalist transformation, of the social formation. A class of free wage labourers can be created, depeasantisation and proletarianisation can proceed, a home market can be formed, and surplus can be appropriated to allow capital accumulation outside of agriculture, and in capitalist forms. But all of this is conceivable with *reproduction f the peasantry*, i.e , with a continuation of the agrarian question in the Engels and the Kautsky-Lenin sense (or, if another terminology is preferred, if not with the reproduction of peasants as the dominant direct producers, then with that of family-producers, or petty commodity producers, as opposed to capitalist farmers and wage labour).

We can have a form of agrarian transition, a resolution of the agrarian question in our third sense, based upon continuing primitive accumulation, such that the agrarian question appears to be resolved in neither the Engels nor the Kautsky-Lenin sense. If, however, the agrarian question is so resolved, in this third sense, in such a way that capitalist industrialisation is permitted to proceed, then, as the social formation comes to be dominated by industry and by the urban bourgeoisie, there ceases to be an agrarian question with any serious implications. There is

no longer an agrarian question in any substantive sense.

(e) Capitalist Agrarian Transition, Influential Models and Diversity

I now turn, in section 3, to a treatment of certain successful capitalist agrarian transitions in Europe/North America; and, in section 4, to consideration of agrarian transition in Asia.

In section 3, I examine the nature of the agrarian transitions which proceeded successfully in England, Prussia, the United States and France. These four 'paths' are shown to have differed significantly from each other. A further example of successful agrarian transition, that in Japan, is examined in section 4, and revealed to have exhibited yet different features.

The prospects are often considered of a limited number of paths of capitalist agrarian transition being successfully traversed in contemporary poor countries. I have felt increasingly ill-at-ease with this because the rendering of the paths referred to seems, sometimes, too stereotyped and narrow, while the paths in question may be too limited in number.

It seems desirable to establish what actually and precisely' was involved in the various paths, before committing oneself to judgements about whether variants of any one of them is likely to be followed in any of today's poor countries. One aim in so proceeding, then, is to establish the exact contours of paths which have been influential, in different ways, in the treatment of contemporary Asian countries: in analysing the experience of Asian countries, in judging the nature and extent of any agrarian transitions which may be in process, and in policy/strategy prescription. The English path has had great analytical influence among Marxist scholars, and a reading of it underpinned one great agrarian intervention by the state in nineteenth century, colonial India; a variant of the Prussian path is sometimes said to be in motion in poor countries; the American path is, on occasion, held out as a desirable model (as it was by Lenin); the Japanese example is frequently suggested, by orthodox development economists, as a paradigm for Asian countries to follow. The French path has not been influential in these ways. It is, however, sufficiently interesting to merit treatment. Having established accurately the broad contours of a particular path, one asks whether there is any likelihood of its being *repeated* in poor countries today ?

One outcome of so proceeding is to establish the considerable diversity which has been displayed historically, in this respect : five successful paths are considered, and no two of the five are the same. The value of the historical exercise is that it points to diversity; suggests, therefore, that yet further diversity *might* be encountered; and provides valuable perspective on such possible diversity.

In section 4, I examine three Asian countries, with the foregoing in mind. I pay particular attention to South Korea and Taiwan, since, like Japan before them, they are being held up as models for others to follow.

Four Paths of Capitalist Agrarian Transition : European/Nc American Diversity

(a) The English Path.

Engels had suggested, when he wrote in 1894, that only in two reg of Europe had capitalism effectively eliminated the peasantry as a signifi economic and political force : in Great Britain and Prussia east o Elbe. Only in these two regions had a full transition to capit agriculture taken place. Peasantries might linger on in these regions, not, he argued, as an effective force, which would have constitute agrarian question for Marxist theoreticians and strategists. In those regions, it was the opposition of capitalist farmers and wage labour mattered. This was the contradiction upon which attention had t concentrated.

In fact, although Engels did not stress this in that text, the natu the capitalist road taken in agriculture is significantly different in the regions mentioned. We may begin our treatment by discussing the Br (or, more accurately, as we will see, the English) path.

The British transition was the one examined by Marx in *Capital*. outcome of that transition is best seen by concentrating on agricult England, since, in the words of two eminent Marxist historians, in nineteenth century peasants 'predominated in Ireland, and the th populated regions of Wales and the Scottish Highlands' [*Hobsbawm Rude*, 1973 : 3]. Our source tells us that while this persistence of peas may have been true 'perhaps in parts of Nothern England such as Pennine dales, and local concentrations could be found here and thei other parts' (*loc. cit.*), nevertheless, on the whole, 'agricultural Englan the nineteenth century . . . had no peasants' (*loc. cit.*). It has, in 1 been shown that peasantries continued as an effective force in, for exam the north-east of Scotland (not mentioned by Hobsbawm and Rude) [*Ca* 1979] into the twentieth century. We see, then, in the British c significant regional diversity. That is worth noting.

It has been argued recently, indeed, that this was true, also, of t England in general, throughout the nineteenth century [*Reed*, 19 Nevertheless, let us assume that the outline of the British model—or, n accurately the English model—retains its essential accuracy. We may t it as the very first broad path followed historically in an agrarian transi to a dominant capitalist agriculture.

The outcome of the path taken has been described as follows :

> The English agricultural population divided into three unec segments. At the top stood a small number of landlords, who ween them owned most of the land . . .This comparative handfu giant landlords rarely cultivated their estates themselves, except the odd home farm or model holding. Essentially they rented tl out to tenant farmers who actually exploited them [capitalist farm

> ...These cultivated their farms essentially by employing the ... men and women who described themselves as agricultural labourers, shepherds, farm-servants etc., [wage labour] ... In other words, the typical English agriculturalist was a hired man, a rural proletarian' [*Hobsbawm and Rude*, 1973 : 3-4].

English capitalist agriculture, then, was characterised by the celebrated 'triple division into landlords, tenant-farmers and hired labourers' (*op cit.*, p. 6).

This was the division in class terms. It had its counterpart in forms of surplus appropriation. Of that Marx wrote: 'Capital-profit (profit of enterprise plus interest), land-ground-rent, labour-wages, this the trinity formula which comprises all the secrets of the social production process' [*Marx*, 1962 : 794] Whereas, previously, pre-capitalist ground rent had been 'the normal form of surplus-value and surplus-labour' [*Marx*, 1962 : 780], now that normal form was profit, and capitalist ground rent was merely the excess of surplus-value/surplus-labour over capitalist profit.

Here, then, was the English model It was the outcome of a very long historical process, crucial to which was a differentiated peasantry, which eventually broke up into a class of capitalist farmers and a rural proletariat : a complex process, mediated by a variety of interventions by the state. These latter included, critically, the Enclosures, described recently as 'that land reform' which brought about 'the disintegration and reformation of the [cooperatively and communally held) open fields into individual ownership' [*Turner* 1984 : 11] These Enclosures have been the subject of great controversy among historians, and that controversy continues (for a survey see (*Turner*, 1984)). It seems clear, however, that the English agrarian transition involved significant state intervention, and not least to secure that crucial change in property relations—the way in which land is owned, held and worked—necessary to the full unleashing of capitalism.

Hilton tells us that 'the internal stratification of peasant society, during the greater part of the mediaeval period, was strictly limited' (*Hilton*, 1973 : 34). Nevertheless, that differentiation existed : 'the peasant community was not a community of equals' (*op. cit.* p 32). Moreover, 'the stratification of peasant communities ... was at least as old as the earliest records we have of them' (*loc. cit*). It was to be found in ninth century France and Italy, in eleventh century England, and elsewhere in Europe (*op. cit.*, pp 32-5) The historical puzzle is to explain how an essentially limited stratification, which reproduced itself, with gradual modifications, over long stretches of time, eventually was transformed into the fundamental class divisions of capitalist agriculture. Part of the answer may lie in the manner in which forms of surplus appropriation changed.

Marx had, in volume 3 of *Capital*, sketched in some of the possible, early history of differentiation. He suggested, first, that a shift from

ıbour rent to rent in kind contained the seeds of differentiation :

> Compared with labour rent, the producer rather has more room for action to gain time for surplus-labour whose product shall belong to himself, as well as the product of his labour which satisfies his indispensable needs. Similarly, this form will give rise to greater differences in the economic position of the individual direct producers. At least the possibility for such a differentiation exists, and the possibility for the direct producer to have in turn acquired the means to exploit other labourers directly' [*Marx*, 1962 : 776].

'hat has considerable plausibility. It is important in directing our attention ›wards the process of differentiation : how it gets under way and how it ıay develop. It needs, however, to be investigated carefully by historians.

Marx further suggested that the possibility of differentiation increases gnificantly with the development of money-rent :

> The transformation of rent in kind into money-rent . . . is not only inevitably accompanied, but even anticipated, by the formation of a class of propertyless day-labourers, who hire themselves out for money. During their genesis, when this new class appears but sporadically, the custom necessarily develops among the more prosperous peasants subject to rent payments, of exploiting agricultural wage-labourers for their own account, much as in feudal times, when the more well-to-do peasant serfs themselves also held serfs. In this way they gradually acquire the possibility of accumulating a certain amount of wealth and themselves becoming transformed into future capitalists. The old self-employed possessors of land themselves thus give rise to a nursery school for capitalist tenants, whose development is conditioned by the general development of capitalist production beyond the bounds of the countryside. This class shoots up very rapidly when particularly favourable circumstances come to its aid, as in England in the 16th century, where the then progressive depreciation of money enriched them under the customary long leases at the expense of the landlords [*Marx*, 1962 : 779].

gain, a plausible hypothesis; and, again, one that needs the most careful search by historians.

That early history of peasant differentiation and the long gestation the womb of feudal society are critical episodes in the complex process ıich resulted, in *England*, in the first fully-formed capitalist agriculture. e note an eventually marked and ever-increasing differentiation. The vestigation of that history must surely tell us much about the nature of e English transition.

The nature of the English landlord class must, also, be a critical part the depicting of the English path. That I would stress. It seeme to me be of extreme importance. We note the following features of the ıglish landlord class. The first has already been mentioned : that it mained a *landlord* class, and took to cultivation (with wage labour) only

o a minor degree. It was a capitalist landlord class, which did not become a class of capitalist farmers.

Secondly, we may consider the role of the English landlord class with respect to the development of the productive forces in capitalist agriculture. The possibility exists of landlords investing in the land, and receiving a return on that as part of the rental payment, although such an element is quite distinct from capitalist ground-rent. It is conceivable that landlords might play an important role in this regard, through productive investment in the land : in buildings, drainage, fencing, etc. In principle, they might also make a significant contribution by themselves developing new methods, or by actively encouraging their capitalist tenants in this direction Indeed, 'in the traditional version of English agrarian history, at least that of the eighteenth century, the great improving landlords played a central role' [*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 190] in stimulating the adoption of improved farming techniques.

That version, indeed, became part of the ideology of the Permanent Settlement, instituted by the British colonial state in eastern India, in the late eighteenth century. The British sought to create just such a class of Indian landlords. I will have more to say about this below.

It is a version, however, that has been severely questioned. It has been suggested that :

> English landowners were a class of consumers, and (that) the greater part of their borrowings were contracted for non-productive purposes, to provide doweries, to fund short-term debts contracted as a result of extravagant living, to build mansions [*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 200]

The English landlord class

> were not primarily interested in ensuring rapid improvements on their estates, but in seeing that their estates were let to good tenants, in the limited sense of men of good character, ability and adequate capital [*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 199].

In that way, they would safeguard their return. English landlords did make 'productive expenditure' [*Hobsbawm and Rude*, 1973 : 13]. That might also be necessary to a satisfactory return. But,

> it is reasonably clear that the landowners as such did not make a very substantial contribution to the discovery of new methods' [*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 190]

and were

> not . . . often the pace makers in agrarian advance (*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 192).

Their supposed influence in spreading knowledge of advanced methods through employing them on the home farm seems most doubtful ; while there is little evidence to support the proposition that new methods were imposed via the covenants placed in leases [*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 190-1] It seems that

> in the eighteenth century at least, much of the landowner's m(specifically e onomic activity can be interpreted as a response pressure from the tenants' [*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 199.]

That is to say,

> they were not the creators of the new agriculture so much as creat by it' [*Habakkuk* 1968 : 191].

The English landlord class was not, then, an actively progressi improving class, deeply involved in agriculture and its methods. After a 'they did not acquire their land in order to develop it, but in order enjoy it [*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 199-200]. If it was not actively progressi neither, however, was it actively obstructive so far as the development capitalist agriculture was concerned. What productive investment th made in the land, seems to have been made with the aim of attracting retaining the best tenants [*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 199]. We may note, indee a third, important characteristic of this class, which, if it did not ser actively to encourage the development of the productive forces, certai did not hold that back and may have contributed to it.

The third feature relates to the level of capitalist ground-rent appr priated. One may say that 'so far as the landlord was concerned, econ mic rationality consisted in linking his land as closely as he could to t market . . . and in getting the maximum rent from the most business-li tenant-farmers' [*Hobsbawm and Rude* 1973 : 12] In fact, however, t evidence seems to suggest that the maximum rent was not extracted. has been observed that 'among some eighteenth century landowners the is to be found, at least before the spectacular rise of prices at the end the century, a reluctance to raise the rents of a sitting tenant' [*Habakku* 1968 : 199]. Not only that, but :

> Even in the mid-nineteenth century, when the subject for the fir time.. came under the scrutiny of Parliament, tenancy right was jumble of local custom and innovation, which on balance probab gave the tenant rather better than market terms. The mere fact th 'rack-renting', which means merely charging a pure market ren developed the connotation of inhuman hardness, is significar [*Hobsbawm and Rude*, 1973 : 12].

A fourth characteristic is also worthy of note. This is the continuin political power of this class, long after the final dominance of capitalism i English agriculture. Marx cited Palmerston's cynical response to a attempted Irish Tenancy Rights Bill : 'The House of Commons is a hous of landed proprietors' [*Marx*, 1962 : 611] ; and Marx observed, in th 1860s, that 'landlords everywhere exert considerable, and in Englan overwhelming, influence on legislation' [*Marx*, 1962 : 612]. The watershe had come, perhaps, with the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846, which represented a signal victory of the manufacturing bourgeoisie over the landlord class (it was a victory, too, over capitalist farmers, of course, and both landlords and capitalist farmers had been active in opposing abolition

[*McCord*, 1968] [*Crosby*, 1977] : but it is not the political power of farmers that concerns us here). Nevertheless, their political power took a long time finally to whither.

(b) The Prussian Path

Both Lenin and Kautsky were concerned with the precise forms that the development of capitalism would take in the countryside. Neither assumed that a single trajectory would be followed everywhere, or a single outcome secured. Marx had considered the English path and given it theoretical precision. Lenin, in examining the prospectus for and the forms likely to be taken by the development of capitalism in Russia at the turn of the century, had contrasted two very different possible transitions to capitalism in the countryside. One of these was via the Prussian path (Engels' Prussia east of the Elbe), and the other via the American path. The latter, which Lenin favoured as the desirable model for a Russian capitalist agrarian transition, I will consider in the next sub-section. The former, which was regarded as anathema by Lenin, is my concern here. It stood in sharp contrast to the English path.

In this Prussian path, as identified by Lenin, 'capitalism from above', the feudal landlord class was transformed into a capitalist class. Again, the outcome would be the result of long, slow and complex processes ; and again the intervention of the state would be crucial. These processes and that intervention I cannot pursue in detail here. It is the broad outlines of the path that are my concern. Nevertheless, they must be borne in mind. It is 'capitalism from above' because the processes in question were controlled by the class of large feudal landlords : in a manner which stifled any development of the peasant economy, analogous to its development in England, whereby a capitalist agriculture might emerge from an increasingly differentiating peasantry.

The Prussian Junkers—'the aristocratic group of large agricultural estate owners situated on the lands east of the Elbe river' [*Gerschenkron*, 1966 : 21]—were the bastion of Prussian feudalism. They were 'a group of feudal lords closely linked by bonds of kinship, neighbourly tradition, and common economic and social interests [*Gerschenkron*, 1966 : 21].

In the wake of the Peasant War of 1525, 'the same ideal conditions of feudal ownership, for which the German nobility had vainly yearned throughout the Middle Ages, and which it had finally achieved at a time when the feudal economy was disintegrating, were now gradually extended to the lands east of the Elbe' [*Engels*, [1965 : 156]. When feudalism had broken down irrevocably in England, here, in Prussia, it was established with a vengeance.

By the end of the sixteenth century, the Prussian Junkers had succeeded, with the aid of state power, in enserfing to themselves 'the formerly free peasants of the German East ..[in] an almost complete sub-

jugation of large segments of the peasantry' [*Gerschenkron*; 1966 : viii]. As Engels described it :

> The peasants east of the Elbe...were turned into serfs subject to arbitrary corvee and burdens, and their free marks were simply turned into the lord's property, where they retained only the usufructs granted by mercy of their master...Within less than a hundred years the free peasants east of the Elbe were turned into serfs, first in fact, and then juridically as well.. After the country was pacified it became possible to go in for large-scale farming everywhere, and, on the other hand, such farming was increasingly necessitated by the growing need for money. The cultivation of big estates by means of compulsory serf labour at the lord's account thus gradually provided a source of income...As soon as the peasant was turned serf . with the acquiesence of the jurists in the courts [the lord]...commanded the peasant to labour for him as much, as often and as long as it suited him. The peasant was obliged to work, cart, plough, sow and harvest for his lord at his first behest, even if his own field went untended and his own harvest perished in the rain. His dues in kind and money were similarly inflated to the utmost [*Engels*, 1965 : 156-8].

Here was a classical form of feudalism, however late its arrival.

The profitability of the Junkers' estates was enhanced by the price revolution of the sixteenth century ; in the seventeenth century, the devastations of the Thirty Years' War increased their political power and allowed further appropriation of peasant land ; while in the eighteenth century they successfully avoided extension of the policy of abolition of personal subjection of the peasantry on public domains [*Gerschenkron*, 1966 : viii, 21] [*Engels*, 1965 : 158-9]. They expanded their demesne at the expense of peasants (all peasants, by and large) : placing ever new burdens on an enserfed peasantry, and 'extending and intensifying labour rents' [*Kay*, 1974 : 78]. The scope for processes of differentiation was severely limited , although, even in such circumstances, some rich peasants did emerge.

Crucial to their transformation into a clas of capitalist farmers was the abolition of serfdom in Prussia, in 1807 [*Cipolla*, 1973 : 95-8] [*Perkins*, 1984 : 6-7]. In the south and west of Germany that abolition 'produced, or further improved, the independent status of farmers or tenants of fixed tenure' [*Gerschenkron*, 1966 : 23]. It thereby hastened differentiation of the peasantry, and helped the emergence of capitalist farmers from within the German peasantry, in those regions of Germany. Not so in Prussia east of the Elbe. There, the Junkers survived, and not only that, they 'managed to turn the agrarian reform designed to cut the economic ties between peasants and Junkers into a large-scale operation of engrossing additional peasant land' [*Gerschenkron*, 1966 : viii].

We note that it took a cataclvsmic 'external' event to hasten, even to

make possible, the agrarian transition. As Engels observed : 'On October 14, 1806, the entire Prussian state was smashed in a single day at Jena and Auerstedt' [*Engels*, 1965 : 160]. That opened the way for the edict of 1807. 'The time was ripe for action' (*loc. cit.*). Engels commented : 'The far-famed enlightened agrarian legislation of the "state of reason" had but a single purpose : to save as much of feudalism as could be saved' [*Engels*, 1965 : 162]. But feudalism could not be saved. Its death throes were merely prolonged. Here, we have state intervention, with one avowed purpose, i.e. freeing the peasantry to the advantage of peasant cultivators, having a very different outcome. The peasants were, indeed, 'freed', but not in the avowed way. The manner of that 'freeing' was crucial to the nature of the Prussian path of capitalist agrarian transition.

The land of both poor and richer peasants was appropriated This took place in the following way :

> The Prussian Edict of 1807. eliminated the personal status of serf, and proceeded through the regulation of relations between the *Junkers* and the former serf peasantry. The latter involved the removal of the obligation of peasants to perform labour services on *Junker* farms, in exchange for the surrender of a proportion of their land. In the process the *Junkers* realised a substantial increase in the area of their holdings from the proportion of their land surrendered by the larger peasants, whose holdings were of sufficient size to support at least one plough team, and from the addition of holdings of small peasants who were excluded from the regulation process...The incorporation of the latter holdings into *Junker* farms occurred not only because the law permitted such expropriation and denied the small peasant ownership of his land. As a legacy of serfdom such peasants were generally unwilling to work on *Junker* holdings, once compulsion resting upon their personal status as serfs had been removed [*Perkins*, 1984 : 6].

The *Junker* had gained a large amount of land, but, with the disappearance of obligatory labour services, had lost his captive labour supply. An alternative labour supply had to be created.

So it was that 'the peasant himself became a labourer on the lord's lands . . . (so that) while in the West the old feudal construction of *Grundherrschaft* ("manorial economy") was destroyed, in the East a new system of *Gutsherrschaft* ("estate economy") took its place, which contrived both to adapt itself to the requirements of the market economy then in the making and to preserve the spirit of feudalism' [*Gerschenkron*, 1966 : 23]. Prussia's distinctive transition to capitalism in the countryside was under way. At first, 'peasant labour services and t. . compulsory farm service of peasant youth on *Junker* farms were replaced by contractually hired farm servants and the cottager system . . . the latter (involving) the exchange of labour for an allocation of the land' [*Perkins*, 1984 : 5]. It was wage

labour, free in Marx's double sense, but not without the vestigial traces of feudalism upon it.

A critical period seems to have come between the middle of the nineteenth century and the beginning of its last quarter. Thus :

> In the course of the nineteenth century, they (the *Junkers*) had to fend off successive crises, caused by market forces and by Prussian reforms, by the rise of competing mercantile classes, and by the spread of inimical ideas. Their greatest success came in the years from 1850 to 1873. when agricultural prices recovered after the post-war low of 1825-6, when small peasant holdings were annexed by them, and when their political condition was newly strengthened by Bismarck, a Junker . . . (*Stern*, 1977 : 47).

From the middle of the nineteenth century, the form of labour previously described 'was increasingly replaced by confined labourers living in tied cottages, who were virtually landless and paid largely in kind' [*Perkins* 1984 : 3] ; to be replaced, increasingly, from the 1870s by labour receiving cash wages (*Loc. cit.*). There was also an increasing dependence on foreign seasonal migrants (especially from Poland).

By then, in marked contrast to England, 'landlord and farmer were identified in the same person—the Junker—and therefore ground rent and profit were appropriated by one actor' [*Kay*, 1974 : 78]. Landlords had ceased to be takers of feudal rent. Instead, they now appropriated surplus value from free wage labour, via the wage relation, as capitalist farmers. They 'worked their estates directly and lived on agricultural profits' [*Habakkuk*, 1968 : 197].

Lenin summed up the distinctive nature of the Prussian path :

> the old landlord economy, bound as it is by thousands of threads to serfdom, is retained and turns slowly into purely capitalist "Junker" economy. The basis of the final transition . . . to capitalism is the internal metamorphosis of feudalist landlord economy. The entire agrarian system of the state becomes capitalist and for a long time retains feudalist features' [*Lenin*, 1964a : 32].

This was a far more reactionary solution of the agrarian question than had been the English path. It involved, of course, rich peasants being transformed into capitalist farmers—'a small minority of *Grossbauern* ("big peasants")' [*Lenin*, 1962 : 239]—but in close alliance with landlords. It entailed a limited, or constrained, differentiation of the peasantry, and the degradation of the peasant masses' [*Lenin*, 1964a : 33].

It is a form of agrarian transition seen by some as likely in certain contemporary poor countries. That I will discuss below.

(c) The American Path

Lenin's second form of transition he called the American path. This was 'capitalism from below', since it was predominantly from the peasantry that capitalism emerged. It was the dominant form of agrarian transition

which Lenin identified as proceeding in the United States ; and a variant of which he hoped for in the pre-Revolution Russia in which he saw capitalism developing.

Such a form of transition is possible either where a landlord class does not exist at all, or is found in a weak form. But it is conceivable, too, where a strong landlord class is found : if appropriate developments take place, which serve to weaken its strength sufficiently. Here, 'there is no landlord economy, or else it is broken up by revolution, which confiscates and breaks up the feudal estates' [*Lenin*, 1962 : 239]. Such a revolution will involve significant struggle by the peasantry, probably spearheaded by the rich peasantry. It is also likely to require substantial action by the state : against the landlord class, and on behalf of the peasantry (and especially the rich peasantry).

This, the American path, differs fundamentally from both the English and the Prussian paths, in the absence of a landlord class as an effective force. That Lenin stressed. We shall see, moreover, that in the way that it *actually* worked out in North America it differed in another fundamental sense : in the relative absence of wage labour.

By whichever of the sub-routes such an agrarian transition would proceed—the former in North America and the latter, Lenin hoped, in Russia—the essential feature was that : 'the peasant predominates, becomes the sole agent of agriculture, and evolves into a capitalist farmer . . . the main background is transformation of the patriarchal peasant into a bourgeois farmer' [*Lenin*, 1962 : 239]. In this path, 'the basis of the final transition . . . to capitalism is the free development of small peasant farming' [*Lenin*, 1964 a : 32-3]. I shall here concentrate on what actually happened in North America.

Lenin was abundantly aware of the *diversity* which existed in North ica. We may pause to note that diversity. Such diversity is likely to countered in any large social formation : to the extent, indeed, that we ont not *one* agrarian question, but, possibly, a plurality of agrarian ions. Lenin would, in 1915, write of the United States :

> the U.S.A. has the largest size, the greatest diversity of relationships, and the greatest range of nuances and forms of capitalist agriculture . . We find here, on the one hand, a transition from the slave-holding—or what is in this case the same, from the feudal—structure of agriculture to commercial and capitalist agriculture ; and, on the the other hand, capitalism developing with unusal breadth and speed in the freest and most advanced bourgeois country . . . We find here areas which have long been settled, highly industrialised, highly intensive and similar to most of the areas of civilised, old capitalist Western Europe ; as well as areas of primitive, extensive cropping, and stock raising, like some of the outlying areas of Russia or parts of Siberia. We find large or small farms of the most diverse types : great latifundia, plantations of the former slave-holding South, and

> the homestead West, and the highly capitalist North of the Atlantic seaboard ; the small farms of the Negro share-croppers, and the small capitalist farms producing milk and vegetables for the market in the industrial North or fruits on the Pacific coast ; 'wheat factories' employing hired labour and the *homesteads* of 'independent small farmers, still full of naive illusions about living by the "labour of their own hands" [*Lenin*, 1964b : 100-1].

It is a comprehensive and an eloquent statement. It makes the diversity point most effectively.

There was, of course, no *single* American path to agrarian transition, any more than there was a single British path or a single Prussian one. We can, however, say that the feature of that path identified by Lenin--the absence of a landlord class as an effective force—did exist significantly in North America[3]. We may further say that here we have a possible form of agrarian transition to capitalism in poor countries : provided appropriate action can be taken with respect to landlords. We recall, however, the most unusual nature of the American experience. As has been observed :

> The United States is unique in that it was settled by independent family farmers steeped in a commercial economy tied to the world market, who had access to vast reaches of land without feudal ties (i.e., as owner-cultivators). The family farm system grew dramatically during the nineteenth century as millions of settlers spilled over the continent' [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1980 : 23].

Certainly, no contemporary poor country fulfils such conditions. A country like Brazil has, indeed, had an 'open frontier' : but there certainly has not been 'access to vast reaches of land without feudal ties' for 'millions of settlers' (on the Brazilian frontier see [*Foweraker*, 1981] [*Foweraker*, 1982] [*Velho*, 1973]).

If, following our usage so far, we designate these 'independent family farmers' as peasants (others have suggested that they may more usefully be identified as petty commodity producers[4] [*Friedmann*, 1978a] [*Friedmann*, 1978b] [*Friedmann* 1980]), we may say that an agrarian transition would seem to depend upon an appropriately differentiating peasantry. That was, manifestly, what Lenin envisaged. His clear expectation, indeed, was that the transition would be characterised by the emergence, as this differentiation proceeded, of a class of capitalist farmers confronting, and appropriating surplus value from, a class of wage labourers.

It would be like both the English and Prussian models, in the existence of the wage relation as the essential means by which surplus labour was extracted. But, unlike the English model, there was no significant class of capitalist landlords ; and, unlike the Prussian path, it was peasants rather than landlords becoming capitalists (it was also altogether less reactionary than the Prussian case).

What Lenin did not envisage was the extent to which 'the *homesteads*

of "independent" small farmers' would persist tenaciously, and retain a central characteristic : their operation by predominantly family labour. Family labour would remain of crucial significance in North America. Thus, while between 1900 and 1960 self-employed and unpaid family workers fell, as a proportion of the total U S. employed labour force, from 50.5% to 16.9% in agriculture the decline was only from 78.5% to 68.4% [*Friedmann*, 1978a : 73]. There were, to be sure, regional variations, with family labour of greater significance in some areas of agriculture than others [*Friedmann*, 1978a : 74]. But the overwhelming significance of family labour, overall, is clear.

It has been suggested that this remarkable survival of the 'family farm'—or, in analytical terms, of simple/petty commodity production, whose defining characteristics are the exclusive production of a single commodity where 'ownership and labour are combined in the household, and production takes place under conditions of competition' [*Friedmann*, 1978a : 71]—finds part of its explanation in the essentially unchanging nature of the labour process in agriculture. The productive forces have undergone massive change, but have yet to shift agriculture from organisation according to the 'rhythms of nature' to organisation according to the 'rhythms of machines'. The tenacity of the 'family farm' and simple/petty commodity production derives, at bottom, from this, it is argued [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1980 : 27-30].

The argument needs to be examined, and I am sure that it has some force. It is not clear, however, that it should be seen as necessarily, *determining*. Space does not permit its treatment in detail here.[5] But we note, at once, that this cannot constitute the *full* explanation, in the case of the U S A. The labour process in agriculture has remained similarly unchanging for other social formations. Yet this did not prevent the significant emergence of wage labour in agriculture : in, say, England or Prussia. If the argument has validity, it is in relation to the specifice circumstances of America. We must identify what those circumstances are.

To start off with, we may stress the obvious : no less significant for being obvious. Agriculture, based on family farms, played a crucial role in the overall capitalist transformation of the United States : in permitting the transition to a massively dominating and immensely productive capitalist manufacturing industry. Thus, in one formulation :

> The farm sector must be seen as part of the overall system of American capitalism. Capitalist development in manufacturing and agricultural development based on the family farm have proceeded hand in hand . . . The agricultural sector provided a major market for industrial goods, cheap food for industrial workers and a flow of surplus labour to the cities, while capitalist industry supplied inputs to raise farm productivity, purchased farm products, and absorbed the sons and daughters of farmers into its army of labour [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1980 : 30].

That is surely so. It is essential to recall that the agrarian question in the sense of whether agriculture will make the necessary contribution to capitalist industrialisation was triumphantly resolved in the United States.

Our explanation of the persistence of family farms in the United States needs to start with an examination of the *origins* of family farms in the United States It needs then to proceed to more recent state policy towards them. Here, the question is : why, when the wage relation emerged relatively early elsewhere, did it fail to do so pervasively in American agriculture ? As Brewster points out :

> But machines are equally compatible with larger-than-family units as they introduce no new obstacle to expanding a farm subtantially beyond the capacity of a family to do the work in any *particular* operation. It is as easy (or difficult) for a large operator to grow more corn than a family can harvest when harvesting is done with a mechanical picker as when it is done with a husking peg [*Brewster*, 1970 : 5].

Why, then, did capitalism not drive out family farms and replace them with large-scale, mechanised farms, worked with wage labour ? After all, while technical progress has not made this inevitable, it is perfectly compatible with such an outcome. Not only that, but capitalism does not, in this case, given the absence of a landlord class, confront the obstacle of the existence of ground rent : we do not here have the situation of a capitalist farmer having both to earn the average rate of profit and pay capitalist ground rent.

We may first refer to the period of America's so-called 'Second Empire', in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the federal government (the American state) proceeded to the colonisation of the great area west of the Mississippi. It was then that production of wheat by family farms 'became established in a region which had previously been considered the "Uninhabitable American Desert', [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1980 : 290]. It has been argued that this form of production was peculiarly suited to the colonisation of the west : that

> Petty commodity production has a number of features not present under capitalist forms of production which facilitate its expansion on to undeveloped frontiers. The familial nature of this form reduced the necessary infrastructural developments which had to be undertaken by the colonial state. The nature of expansion, through fission provided an extensive and geographic moment which dovetailed with, the territorial designs of the expansionist state. Finally, the ability of petty commodity production to survive without receiving the average rate of profit made this form more amenable to the type of agricultural production most viable on the western prairies. Consequently, while U.S. settler colonialism was indeed a capitalist state form, its expansion on to the western frontier was more easily facilitated by the expansion of this non-capitalist form of commodity

production [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1980 : 300-1].
Here, then, we have a plausible explanation of the origins of the American family farm : of why its insertion as the dominant form of production in agriculture had compelling underpinning in the needs of the expansionist American state.

What of its persistence as the dominant form beyond the middle of the twentieth century? We may identify characteristics of agriculture which suggest an unattractiveness to capitalist, profit maximisers[6]. But that is not enough. We may also see, in the activities of the American state, powerful intervention which has served to reinforce significantly the survival of the family farm/petty commodity production. It is most doubtful that such survival would have been secured to the degree in question without such state intervention.

That state intervention has acted to maintain and support agricultural overproduction and so widespread family farms The origins of overproduction lie in that period of expansion often portrayed as the 'Golden Age of American Agriculture', from the end of the Civil War to 1914 : when the number of farms agricultural production, and labour productivity all rose impressively. The First World War served further to stimulate production. Prices declined, bankruptcies reached high levels, and economic distress was widespread in the 1920s. Agricultural overproduction continued. That distress did not, however, have the ultimate effect which might have been expected (on the foregoing see [*Mann and Dickinson* 1980 : 304-5]) :

> Well into the Great Depression, agricultural surpluses continued to pile up in record amounts In the face of growing social unrest, the Roosevelt administration eventually developed and implemented programs specifically designed to stabilize farm incomes and curtail production. This was the beginning of direct government funding of the agricultural sector which has continued until the present day, and forms the core of U.S. agricultural policy [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1980 : 305].

State intervention in response to the contradictions manifest in American agriculture was under way.

The result of the various interventions--acreage allotment, market quotas, support prices, parity payments, conservation programmes, national crop insurance programmes--has been a continuing overproduction. This has been disposed of by the government in a variety of ways since the 1930 s : through the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation in the 1930 s (to needy families, charities, victims of national emergencies, school lunch programmes, etc.) ; the Land Lease Programme to the Allies at the beginning of the Second World War ; the Marshall Plan after the end of that war, to save Europe for democracy; the Koran war ; and P. L. 480 food aid between 1954 and 1971 [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1980 : 305-6, 310-4]. The overproduction has continued

It is clearly the case that 'government agriculture support prograı have tended to disproportionately benefit the wealthier farmers': in fa they have been distributed very nearly in proportion to the amount production controlled by each farmer [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1980 : 307]. may also be the case now that :

> The consistent inequalities in the distribution of farm benefits indica a growing divorce between the formal claim of the government to supporting and protecting the family farm as the backbone of ıur America and the impact of its actual farm programs which dispropo tionately benefit large enterprises and hence further the ruination small holders [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1980 : 309].

There has, however, been more to that government claim, historicall than this statement allows. Whatever may be true now, and whatever mı happen in the future, it seems clear that the remarkable survival of tl family farm (petty commodity production) owes much to the interventic of the American state.

Clearly, where an agrarian transition from 'below' takes place, tl strong possibility exists that this will take the form not of 'capitalism froı below', with the dominance of the capitalist farmer/wage labour relatioı ship, as expected by Lenin, but, rather, of 'petty commodity productio from below'. We may hypothesise, however, that such an outcome wi require the powerful mediation of the capitalist state.

(d) The French Path.

In an article on the decline of 'the French rural community' in th eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Soboul writes that 'its decline (was precipitated by the French Revolution' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 78]. He furthe comments : 'Economically this (decline) reflected the passage from ı "natural" to a "capitalist" economy in the countryside' (*loc. cit.*) It is th nature of that passage that we wish to identify. Central to it is the impac and legacy of the French Revolution. Our understanding of it depend upon a grasp of the agrarian implications of the French Revolution. That in its turn, requires some comprehension of the pre-1789 French country side.

By 'the French rural community', Soboul meant the more or less cohesive village community, united around struggles, often violent, against the *seignerie* (the feudal lords), for communal land and involved in a 'constant struggle for its economic existence and administrative autonomy' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 80]. With all the significant regional variety that existed, one could nevertheless postulate that 'it possessed a certain administrative structure, an economic and social system founded on the interplay of communal pressures, the limitation of private property and the existence of collectively exploited lands' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 80].

The existence of this 'French rural community', with its collective structures, should not however, be taken to suggest the absence of differen-

tiation within the French peasantry. On the contrary, French social and economic historians have placed great emphasis upon this differentiation: upon 'the social antagonisms which . . . had arisen within the rural community long before the eighteenth century' [*Soboul* 1956 : 83]. Soboul, indeed, identifies several possible contenders for a possible *primum mobile* role, in a capitalist transformation of the French countryside [*Soboul*, 1956 : 86-89] (full and excellent treatment of some of these may be seen in [*Goubert*, 1956]) : among them, most notably, a class of rich peasants (*laboureurs*). But none of them, before 1789, represented anything more than a *potential* significance. Soboul insists that at the end of the old regime the differences within the French peasantry 'were in no sense fundamental' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 84]. Differentiation of the peasantry there assuredly was, but it was, still, quantitative rather than qualitative in nature [*Soboul*, 1956 : 88]. Capitalism existed in no more than embryo form in the womb of the old order.

There is no mention, one notes, of the possibility of an agrarian transition being spearheaded by the French landlord class, church and *seigneurie* : as it was in, say, Prussia, or, in a very different way, Japan (as we shall see below); nor of its being facilitated by that class, as it was in England. The French landlord class is portrayed as thoroughly reactionary; as quite without any progressive elements before 1789. French historians have, indeed, reached for the comparison with England and Prussia, in order to capture the particular nature of the French landlord class. Thus, Georges Lefebvre stresses

> The most important feature of France's rural physiognomy, the one characteristic whose underlying influence may well have had the most profound consequences for the history of the French Revolution. The English aristocracy, which had created extensive farms by the enclosure movement, rented these properties to a small number of usually well-to-do, well-educated tenants, in eastern Germany, the *Gutsherr* managed his vast domain himself by means of the labour services his peasants owed him But in France, priests, nobles, and bourgeois almost never managed their properties directly; their domains were extremely fragmented and rented-out as middle-sized farms, even as individual fields. Almost all the property of priests, parishes, or charitable foundations were cultivated in this manner. A very large number of French peasants thus cultivated land they did not own. Some were tenants on large farms, most were small sharecroppers; even-day labourers were often able to rent a small piece of meadow or a garden plot. Not all those who rented land were necessarily owners as well. The tenants on large properties often did not own any land; on the other hand, small owners frequently rounded out their farms by cultivating adjoining land under the terms of a lease. Thus, in France, almost all the arable land was already directly cultivated by the peasants, who were

individually responsible for the losses and profits of their operations [*Lefebvre*, 1977 : 34].

There was no direct management of properties by French landlords. No agrarian transition to capitalism was under way by that route. What was happening on their land was, however, crucial. There were very significant regional variations, but, in overall terms, it has been estimated that, at the time of the Revolution, only between 30 and 40 percent of the land was owned by peasants [*Lefebvre*, 1977 : 34]. Of the 60 to 70 percent of the land that was tenanted, most was rented out not to the substantial tenants, but to small peasants.

The French Revolution had a dramatic effect upon the countryside. What, however, did it mean in terms of our problematic ? How did it affect the tendencies which might have been expected eventually to produce an agrarian transition to capitalism ?

There was one very clear sense in which the French Revolution cleared the ground for a possible unleashing of capitalism in agriculture. It removed the massive barrier, inherent in deeply-rooted feudal relationships : an act of transformation 'that the monarchy was incapable of achieving . . . by means of reform' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 88]. Thus it

> destroyed the seigneurial regime and abolished feudal rights. It proclaimed the total right to property . . . hence the freedom to enclose and cultivate and the restriction of collective rights . . . the Revolution broke the chains which shackled the progress of the productive forces [*Soboul*, 1956 : 88].

But it also, in the manner of its unfolding and the kind of class relationships and antagonisms which it encompassed, produced its particular form of agrarian transition. Soboul tells us that 'the Revolution . . gave free play to the development of the capitalist mode of production in the countryside' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 88] On his own account, however, it was freedom that was severely constrained.

Any of Soboul's contenders might, with the feudal shackles removed, have emerged as dominating capitalist farmers, although we may allow that his better-off *laboureurs,* or rich peasants, were most likely to do so. It is even conceivable that a reconstituted landlord class might have played a progressive role—either directly (as in Prussia or Japan), or in a facilitating sense (as in England). What happened ?

The Revolution modified the distribution of land and proprietary rights in land, as church land and the land of emigre nobles were sold. The major beneficiaries were the urban middle class and the rich peasantry. '*Manoeuvriers* and dwarf peasants gained little from it' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 88]. It would seem, then, that the way was open to a transition spearheaded by the rich peasantry. Indeed, 'the French rural community', was destroyed, with 'the abolition of feudal rights and tithes . . . the ancient antagonism between landed aristocracy and rural community also went' [*Soboul*, 1956 :]. Soboul stresses that 'the Revolution, in liberating the productive

forces from their feudal shackles, unchained economic individualism and accelerated the disintegrating process whose beginnings in the communities we have traced back to before 1789 [*Soboul*, 1956 : 89]. Nevertheless, one witnesses, in Soboul's phrase, 'the incompleteness of the *bourgeois* revolution in agriculture' (*loc. cit.*). That was so through in the nineteenth, and into the twentieth, centuries.

The attempt to secure a compulsory division of communal lands during the revolutionary period failed [*Soboul*, 1956 : 89] The *laboureurs* were, indeed, now 'finally constituted (as) as class' (*Soboul*, 1956 : 89). With the changes, moreover, 'the hitherto latent antagonism between the *laboureurs* . . . and the mass of peasants attached to natural economy became overt' [*Soboul*, 19.6 ; 89]. But the specificity of the French agrarian transition, rooted in the concrete changes wrought by the Revolution, is clear. The 'mass of peasants'- a poor and middle peasantry - 'unable to subsist except in and through the community, clung desperately to the traditional forms of production and stubbornly called for the maintenence of the limitations which collective constraint imposed on private property' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 89].

This they did in an 'obscure but bitter struggle' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 91]. As Soboul has it :

> Throughout the nineteenth century the small peasants fought for every foot of their right to live and the rights of usage over fields, heaths and woods which safeguarded it . . . Forest disorders, attacks on alienated common lands, agrarian tumults about rights of usage : all these were reflexes of self-defence by the rural community [*Soboul*, 1956 : 91-2].

There were, we note again, significant regional variations. The resistance was most marked in the southeast, the southwest and the centre of France: while in the countryside of the north capitalist transformation did not meet such opposition [*Soboul*, 1956 : 93] (on the north as the location of areas of large-scale, 'capitalist' farming cf *Weber*, 1979 : 118).

The resistance was certainly enough, however, to mark significantly the whole social formation, and give to the French agrarian transition a distinctive character : producing, in Soboul's words, 'a compromise settlement . . . (which) considerably inhibited the capitalist transformation of French agriculture' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 91]. Soboul makes the comparison with England (a comparison that French intellectuals made from at least the time of the Physiocrats onwards). He points to 'the maintenance of collective usages, whose abolition was left to the will of the peasants, the subdivision of property and exploiting unit . . (and the long-remaining autonomy of the small rural producer'. and argues that 'had enclosures and the concentration of strips (*remembrement*) been imposed in France as they were in England, capitalism would have triumphed as much in agriculture as in industry' [*Soboul*, 1956 : 91].

A . . . notes, for example, the

remarkable persistence of sharecropping in France. Still, in 1892, nearly 11% of total farm area was sharecropped land, a proportion, which, given the very unequal regional incidence (sharecropping was widespread in the southwest, the centre and the south-east of France [*Weber*, 1979 : 126]), indicates far higher proportions in some regions; and it was a proportion which remained stubbornly constant as late as 1946 (for figures and source see [*Byres*, 1983 : 21].

There is nothing surprising in the fact of resistance, nor in its stubborness. It would, one notes, be intensified, in circumstances in which alternative industrial employment was not being created on a scale sufficient to absorb labour from the countryside (as in contemporary poor countries). What is surprising, however, is its prolonged nature in the French case. Part of the explanation appears to lie in the emerging class alignments : between landed aristocracy, bourgeoisie and peasantry. It has been suggested that

> The stubborn struggle of the landed aristocracy against the Revolution long prevented any compromise with the *bourgeoisie*, thus obliging the latter to look to the peasants for help, even to the poor peasants, whose own resistance made them a force to reckon with in any case [*Soboul*, 1956 : 91].

It was, after all, emigre property that was sold. We are reminded by Lefebvre that : 'In many villages none was for sale, for all the nobles did not leave their homes, and those who stayed were not all guillotined, contrary to what is often believed abroad and even in France [*Lefebvre*, 1977 : 42]. The landlord class continued to include nobles, and they did not capitulate easily or finally to the Revolution. Again, the nature of the landlord class is critical it seems.

It is a landlord class quite unlike the English one : in the proportion of the land owned, in the size of landed property, in the facilitating role played with respect to capitalist transformation, in political power (cf. [*Zeldin*, 1977 : 127-129]). It did not itself take to direct cultivation to any degree (unlike the Prussian landlord class). There were tenants (many of them, as we have seen, sharecroppers) : in 1862 almost one-half of the land was worked by tenants (including sharecroppers) [*Zeldin*, 1979 : 151]. But it did not, necessarily or predominantly, let its land to large capitalist tenants (unlike the English landlord class) : although some certainly did, especially in the north (for example, around Paris, where the land was owned to a considerable degree by city-dwellers as an investment [*Zeldin*, 1979 : 152]. It seems to have existed in distinct 'fractions' : nobles, city-dwellers, etc. One of those fractions—the nobility which retained land—engaged in a continuing struggle against the Revolution. That, as we have seen, was crucial to the nature of the French agrarian transition.

When, then, might one date the crucial period during which the full capitalist transformation of the French countryside was finally effected ? Weber, in his much-acclaimed book, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, suggests that

a critical turning-point, with respect to an agricultural revolution, can be located in the 1840's : but only for the areas of large-scale farming, found in the north, and in which, as we have already suggested, capitalist transformation had already proceeded, largely via rich tenant-farmers [*Weber*, 1979 : 117-8]. For the great bulk of France—the centre, the south and the west, areas of small peasant farming, where sharecropping was often prevalent—he suggests that a turning-point may be found in the 1890s or 1900s : and not before [*Weber*, 1979 : 118-29]. We may accept his judgement.

But let us not forget the remarkable persistence of sharecropping, amid this capitalist transformation, right up to the immediate post second world war years. France's lingering peasantry did not easily yield to capitalism's force and logic. When Engels, in 1894, referred to France as 'the classical land of small-peasant economy' [*Engels*, 1970 : 460], he was drawing attention to an important truth. The stubborn persistence of that small-peasant economy, in the face of capitalism's onslaught, is eloquent testimony to the dangers involved in dogmatically assuming a form of agrarian transition in which the peasantry is quickly swept away.

(e) Some Tentative Observations, With Capitalist Agrarian Transition in Asia in Mind.

We may pause to make some tentative observations about these variants of the European/North American experience of capitalist agrarian transition, with possible capitalist agrarian transition in Asia in mind. We need hardly labour the fact of substantive diversity : a diversity of successful capitalist agrarian transition which will be added to when we consider the Japanese path, in section 4. Indeed, the four paths considered in this section surely do not exhaust European/North American diversity. They do, however, yield some possible implications.

We note, first, that there is nowhere, among poor countries today, and certainly not in Asia, any sign of a possible English path. Nowhere does a landlord class remotely like the English one, either in its idealised version or in its actual version, exist.

An attempt to initiate such a path *was* tried by the British in India, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, via the famous Permanent Settlement. In 1793, the British created 'a strange group of great landlords, a class whose annual payments of land revenue to the State were fixed . . . at sums which were to remain unchanged for all time to come [*Thorner*, 1955 : 124] These were the great *zamindars* of eastern India. It was a complete failure so far as generating capitalist agriculture was concerned. The British hoped that these *zamindars* would become a class akin to the great Whig landed aristocracy : a class of improving landlords, under whose aegis a prosperous capitalist agriculture would emerge. It was a hope that was rudely shattered. The Permanent Settlement simply brought into being a class of large, parasitic, mainly absentee, landlords,

operating via semi-feudal relations, and a stagnant agriculture. As Ranajit Guha has it:

> After the first three decades or so of its existence as a policy it (the Permanent Settlement) was to turn back on its course, to degenerate into an apologia for the quasi-feudal land system in Eastern India during the remainder of British rule . . . The Permanent Settlement assumed the character of a pre-capitalist system of land ownership, mocking its own original image as visualized by Philip Francis and Thomas Law [*Guha*, 1963 : 186]

(It was, as Marx observed, 'a caricature of large-scale English landed estates' [*Marx*, 1962 : 328] : a caricature of both their idealised and their actual forms.

Attempts to transplant historical models, without regard for existing objective circumstances, can go grotesquely awry : can secure an outcome utterly at variance with that intended. In this case, other aspects of colonial policy dictated that it could not possibly succeed on the intended terms (cf. [*Guha*, 1963 : 186]. That landlord class, indeed, and the deeply-rooted semi-feudal structures at whose apex it stood, constituted a massive obstacle to a successful capitalist agrarian transition in India. It would have to be extirpated, or fundamentally transformed, before a capitalist agrarian transition became possible.

Extirpation might open the way to an 'agrarian transition from below'. If one thing emerges clearly from our briet excursion into history it is that any such transition from below requires either a smashing of existing state structures, and the class configurations which they represent, as stressed by Lenin, and as in the French case, with the French Revolution; or significant state intervention, as in the U.S. case. In contemporary circumstances, this is the territory of agrarian reform. It requires a powerful state, with the capacity to move against the social, political and economic power of a strong landlord class. It is also likely to require sustained struggle by peasants. We note that such struggle and such an outcome do not necessarily benefit middle peasants, poor peasants or landless labourers (at least, not in the short—or medium-run). The immediate beneficiaries may be rich peasants.

Our historical exposition also suggests that a transition from below may come as 'capitalism from below', as envisaged by Lenin, with rich peasants transformed into capitalist farmers; or 'petty commodity production from below', as witnessed in the U.S.A., with the survival of the family farm as the dominant form of production; or with a stubbornly resisting, and surviving, small-peasant economy, as in France. All such possibilities must be contemplated, although none is guaranteed. Again, the nature of the state and of state policy are central.

Yet other possibilities might be envisaged. Only careful, concrete analysis of the objective circumstances, in a particular case, will identify what those possibilities are ; analysis which remains sensitive, in Lenin's

ırase, to the 'infinitely diverse combinations of elements of this or that pe of capitalist evolution' [*Lenin*, 1964a : 33]; and analysis which explores, riously and rigorously, regional diversity. To revert to the Indian example, ıe realities of eastern India are only one among several patterns of agrarn structure in that vast sub-continent. All need to be examined.

Again reverting to a large, semi-feudal landlord class, where such ists, if, instead of its extirpation, one considers the possibility of fundaental transformation, the Prussian path comes readily to mind. It has, deed, been suggested, convincingly, that a variant of the Prussian path is eing followed in a variety of Latin American countries : in, for example, eru, Bolivia, Chile [*Kay*, 1974] [*Kay*, 1980]. Kay distinguishes two broad oads to capitalist agriculture, a landlord and a peasant one. He argues is 'the landlord path [that] is predominant in Latin America' [*Kay*, 980 :5][7], although he is careful to stress that 'the transition to capitalist griculture is not yet complete' (*loc. cit.*). It does, indeed, seem to be the ase that if a full capitalist agrarian transition is to take place in Latin merica, it will be, essentially, via this route. The nature and strength of ıe landlord class ensure this. There has been considerable peasant resistace, but not with any likelihood of a dominant peasant road Kay observes, ırther, that while 'in some cases the State through the implementation of n agrarian reform has attempted to develop a peasant path.. these tempts have largely been unsuccessful' (*loc. cit.*). In Latin America, the easant road will be a subordinate one.

Some have suggested a variant of the Prussian path as a possibility ı parts of India [*Joshi*, 1974: 341], though there is little evidence of its aving proceeded very far there as a dominant form of agrarian transition. Iore realistically, a form of the Prussian path may be being traversed in 'akistan, in the wake of the 'new technology' [*Joshi*, 1974 : 350-351]. We ecall the profoundly reactionary implications of such a path, and the nportance of the state in securing the conditions for its possible traversing.

Both the American and the French paths underline regional diversity. n the French case, I have drawn attention to the successful capitalist ransformation of the countryside in the north, while the small-peasant conomy survived strongly elsewhere. If we consider India, it is the case hat successful capitalist transformation of agriculture is limited to the ıorthwest (the Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh), and pockets elsewhere. That has been via a peasant route: a form of 'capitalism from below'. That required prior struggle by peasants, and successful action igainst landlords (to the benefit of rich peasants, but not other strata of he peasantry or landless labourers). The French example brings to our ıttention the possibility that capitalist transformation may spread from here only slowly, and possibly with difficulty. It is perfectly conceivable hat non-capitalist forms will persist in the countryside in large parts of the Indian social formation for a long time to come.

I have mentioned the need to be sensitive to yet further possibilities

of agrarian transformation. I would conclude these tentative observations by noting possibilities which have been observed in Latin America. They may, or they may not, have potential relevance to some Asian countries. They do, however, underline the 'infinitely diverse combinations of elements' which potential agrarian transitions encompass.

A recent study of the agrarian question in Latin America identifies to further distinct paths there. They 'correspond', the author tells us, 'to the specificity of Latin American social formations and to the current international division of labour' [*De Janvry*,1981: 109]. Whether they will become successful examples of agrarian transition to capitalism remains to be seen. Their potential significance is, however, clear.

One of these De Janvry calls a 'merchant road'. It is found in Colombia, but also elsewhere in Latin America.

It is, he suggests, controlled by financial capital and by industrial capital, as well as by merchant capital. Its nature is as follows: it 'results from the investment of local capital, generated in mercantile or other urban activities (in particular among the new petty bourgeoisie of professionals, military and technocrats), in the purchase of agricultural land. In this fashion urban control is established over rural enterprises. Agricultural production on this road is generally modernised, on medium-sized farms, and is characterized by absentee management. Accordingly, there is a high degree of reliance on wage workers; and social relations of production are fully proletarianized' [*De Janvry*, 1981 : 109].

Such a tendency can, certainly, be seen in poor countries outside of Latin America. What one might doubt is quite how typical or widespread it is in any given poor country, and, therefore, whether it is likely to constitute a path along which an agrarian transition might proceed in any full sense.

The second path noted by De Janvry he identifies as 'the contract farming road'. It is, he says, common in Mexico, but 'found increasingly in Latin American agriculture' (*loc.cit.*).

Here one encounters 'the contract farmer or other types of lease arrangements in which multinational agribusiness firms establish contracts with local landowners who in turn are responsible for the actual production process' (*loc cit.*). Such contracts may specify the crop to be grown, the technology used, or the final price of the crop. The technology in question will usually be supplied by the multinational, and so 'production along this road...is highly modernised and takes place on medium—and large—scale units. In Mexico, for example, this road of capitalist development tends to encourage the production of seasonal crops for export, such as winter vegetables, and relies predominantly on seasonal migratory labour' (*loc. cit.*). Such contract farming 'is one of the increasingly important means by which international capital penetrates Latin American agriculture, particularly in countries where ownership by foreign nationals is prohibited—such as Mexico' (*loc. cit.*).

To the extent that such a path is, indeed, as important as suggested, one might still speculate that it is unlikely to be the sole form of agrarian transition, or even the major one. Nevertheless, we have here a path created by modern conditions which must be taken due account of.

I now turn to three examples of capitalist agrarian transition in Asia, which have been held up as paradigms for other Asian countries: those of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

Two Asian Agrarian Transitions

(a) The Japanese Path.

The four European/North American paths discussed in the previous section by no means exhaust the possibilities with respect to the form taken by an agrarian transition to capitalism. Even as Engels, and after him Kautsky and Lenin, were writing on the agrarian question, another, quite distinct path was being followed : this one in Asia, in Meiji Japan (the Meiji Restoration, which terminated the Tokugawa Shogunate, having taken place in 1868 : for an account see [*Beasley*, 1973]. The so-called 'Japanese model' in its non-agrarian as well as its agrarian dimensions, is frequently suggested, in the non-Marxist development literature, as having a whole variety of :atures appropriate to contemporary poor countries—or at least those in .sia. Let us see what it entailed in its agrarian transition.

When, precisely, a full agrarian transition to capitalism took place ı Japan, and the nature of that transition. have been matters of great ontroversy among Japanese Marxists. That controversy has been the entral part of a more general, 'bitter debate .on the nature of prewar apitalism in Japan ..the *Nihon shihonshugi ronso* (the debate on Japanese 'apitalism) [*Yasuba*, 1975 : 63]. The debate started in 1927, and, in the re-war years, was fiercely waged until 1937 [*Itoh*, 1980 : 22 et passim]. It as continued, however, in the post-1945 era, and is not yet spent, affectıg 'virtually all Japanese intellectuals, Marxist and otherwise' [*Yasuba*, 975 : 63]. Its crucial, agrarian component has come to be known as the 'eudalist controversy' (*hoken ronso*) [*Yasuba*, 1975 : 64]. The pity is that o little of the relevant Japanese writing--which amounts to 'hundreds of rticles and books .and at least half a dozen histories of the debate' *Yasuba*, 1975 : 63]—has been translated into English.

The debate on Japanese capitalism has been fought out by two conending schools of Marxist scholars : the *kozaha* and the *ronoha* [*Himmelweit*, 1983 : 322-3] [*Itoh*, 1980 : 22-26, 33-37] [*Yasuba* 1975]. We may listinguish (a) the 1927-1937 debate and (b) its ost-war continuation.

The *kozaha*, or feudalist, school in the 1927-37 debate, supported he political position of the Japanese Communist Party : that position having been guided by the Comintern's theses on Japan of 1927, 1931 and 1932 (those theses are noted and their essential points stated in [*Itoh*, 1980: 23]; they may be seen in detailed extracts in [*Degras*, 1971 : vol. 2, 396-

401, for the July, 1927 thesis ; vol. 3, 192-203 for the April, 1931 and May, 1932 theses]. It did so through its analysis of the nature and development of Japanese capitalism [*Itoh*, 1980 : 23]

The Japanese Communist Party had finally adopted the 1932 thesis as its strategy : a strategy based on the argument that revolution in Japan would proceed in two stages, a bourgeois democratic revolution and a socialist revolution, and that the bourgeois revolution had not yet taken place [*Itoh*, 1980 : 23]. The *kozaha* scholars, in support of this, held that

> the Meiji Restoration...(was) a mere reform of the feudal land system ...and.. that a feudal or at least semi feudal exploitation of...peasants still existed. The Japanese emperors since the Meiji era thus were seen in this scheme as existing within an absolutist monarchy whose social bases consisted of both feudal landowners and bourgeois capitalists.. The poor standard of living of tenant farmers and their high rent in kind, still amounting to about 50 percent of gross product, were features of Japanese society which seemed to conform with this view [*Itoh*, 1980 : 23]

In terms of the problematic I have been discussing, it was being argued that even in the 1930s an agrarian transition to capitalism had not taken place in Japan. Japanese capitalism 'was based on semi-feudal landownership.. (and)...semi-serfdom in the agricultural villages' [*Itoh*, 1980: 24]. In the words of the Comintern thesis of May, 1932, a correct appraisal of the Japanese situation could not be secured 'without taking into account and analysing the peculiarities of the system prevailing in Japan, which combines extraordinarily strong elements of feudalism with a very advanced development of monopoly capitalism' [*Degras*, 1971 : vol. 3, 196].

The view of the *ronoha*, or workers and peasants, school 'served as a theoretical basis for the left-wing of various socialist parties formed outside of the Communist Party...(who argued the possibility of) a direct advance to a socialist revolution in Japan' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 25].

The *ronoha* scholars denied the existence of feudal or semi-feudal relations of production in Meiji Japan. They argued that :

> the Japanese economy had been developing as a capitalist society ever since the Meiji Restoration...(They) claimed that the *kozaha* school had not recognized the actual development of Japanese capitalism but had merely drawn attention to its specific type. In addition they asserted that the *kozaha* view of modern history was upside down in regarding landownership, rather than capitalist production, as the fundamental determinant of the character of modern Japanese society. In contrast, the *ronoha* school regarded the Meiji Restoration as a bourgeois revolution, and stressed the fact that the peasantry was undergoing a process of decomposition into a class of wage labourers...They explained the high level of tenant rent by the severe competition among peasant farmers rather than the existence of semi-feudal coercive expropriation' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 25]

On this view, an agrarian transition to capitalism was at an advanced stage, even if not fully complete. It was certainly possible to identify clearly the nature of that transition: and such an identification would require an analysis of Japan's very strong capitalist class and of developments within the peasantry.

We may turn to the post-war continuation of the debate. The *kozaha* argument is brought into the post-1945 era, although the position of *kozaha* scholars, still 'more or less closely bound up with the ortthodox line of the Japanese Communist Party' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 30], has been a changing one. With that changing position, there have been divisions within the post war *kozaha* school.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, Japanese agriculture was held to be still pre-capitalist and semi-feudal. Critical to its subsequent development, however, would be the impact of the land reform of 1946, insisted upon by the conquering Americans. In a memorandum to the Japanese Government of 9 December, 1945, General MacArthur had written of the 'economic bondage which has enslaved the Japanese farmer to centurise of feudal oppression' (cited in [*Dore*, 1959a : 23]) In so writing he was (unknowingly) stating the *kozaha* position. In a previous memorandum, he had declared that 'Japanese' farmers and their families are about to be liberated from a condition approaching slavery' (cited in [*Dore* 1959a: 152]). The issue for *kozaha* writers was whether the land reform could be sufficiently far-reaching to root out and eliminate semi-feudal production relations in the Japanese countryside.

Immediately after the war, a so-called neo-*kozaha* school emerged. Within it, indeed, the distinction made by Lenin, between the Prussian and the American paths, was reached for, and it was argued that in Japan an American path was possible and should be supported [*Itoh*, 1980 : 31]. Capitalism from below, capitalism whose impulses came from within the peasantry, was possible, with the destruction of the power of the Japanese landlord class (a destruction such as Lenin had called for in pre-revolutionary Russia). In an article published in 1948, indeed, Yamada, a neo-*kozaha* theorist, 'acknowledged that postwar land reform had converted the agricultural land system from semi-feudal into modern small-scale landownership' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 31]. A variant of the American path had been set in motion.

Was a *full* agrarian transition to capitalism under way, then ? This neo *kozaha* line of argument seemed to suggest that it was: Another *kozaha* writer, Hyakuju Kurihara, in fact, in what has been described as an 'analysis (which) was a conspicuous achievement among *kozaha* theorists' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 31], postulated a distinctive post-war Japanese path :

> Supported by a rich empirical analysis he maintained that the semi-feudal landowning class had virtually disintegrated with postwar land reform, and that small farmers had consequently been put under the direct control of state monopoly capitalism, so that there could be no prospect of capitalist development in agriculture (*Itoh*, 1983 : 31).

Here, then, it was being argued, was a resolution of the agrarian quest without the development of capitalist relations in agriculture : 'a bourg revolution, although one without the prospect of capitalist developm [*Itoh*, 1980 : 31]. Central to this reasoning, it seems, were the follow characteristics : the eradiction of tenancy and the creation of a clas owner-cultivators, a very small average holding size, and the absence wage labour. Of these characteristics, only the first was new.

It was an argument which related to post-land reform Japan. might one not apply the essential logic to Meiji Japan, too ? It has b suggested that in both cases the decisive external political power came fr above; in neither case were the farmer or the peasantry a revolution subject acting from below' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 31] A distinctive Japanese pat agrarian transition of this nature, with its roots firmly in the Meiji might well be argued : a non-capitalist transition, which enabled the gen development of capitalism to proceed. This, I think is an accurate repres tation : we have an agrarian transition, in the third sense discussed section 2, which allowed, through agriculture's massive contribut successful capitalist industrialisation and a triumphant overall capit transformation.

But, one notes the post-war situation does differ significantly fr the pre-war one, in as much as the latter *was* characterised by a v powerful landlord class, a very large class of tenants, and the mass extraction of surplus via rent. That, we must allow *was* part of Japa capitalist agrarian transition.

The neo-*kozaha* and Kurihara arguments did not win general supp within the school. A viewpoint very similar to the pre-war one emer as the dominant one. In this, 'Japan had become a semi-colony, subor nated to the interests of U.S. imperialism through the intermediary of t imperial absolutist bureaucracy, which still had its roots in semi-feud landownership' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 32]. According to one prominent orthod *kozaha* writer, Harumaru Inoue (writing in the 1950s), the 'postwar la reform was a mere formal alteration in the prewar semi-feudal landown system. As proof he referred to the untouched ownership of forest lan the remains of tenancy lands of 2.45 acres or less, and the fact that t scale of farms was too small to enable farmers to maintain or increase the standard of living' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 32]. This was not a view which survived f very long. Quite simply, 'it was too far from Japanese agricultural realit in the post-1945 years' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 32]. That seems beyond dispute.

We may complete our treatment of the debate among Japanes Marxists with a brief statement of the *ronoha* post-1945 position Th *ronoha* scholars held that the land reform 'represented neither a bourgeo revolution nor mere reformation of a semi-feudal system of landownershi but was a reformation of modern, private landownership introduced a the expense of large landowners in order to mitigate the serious politica crisis of the capitalist class' [*Itoh*, 1980 : 36].

From a late twentieth century vantage point, Japan is as thoroughly a capitalist society as exists on the face of the earth and is currently the most dynamic of all capitalist social formations. The controversy between rival Japanese Marxist schools may be taken to reflect the unusual nature of the Japanese agrarian transition (for a capitalist agrarian transition assuredly took place) : a transition quite unlike any that had preceded it. We may pause to consider the roots of that transition, which clearly lay in the Meiji era.

Central to it was a powerful landlord class and a peasantry which, if it was not proletarianized during the Meiji era, was as subject a peasantry as one might visualise, and which, under the thrall of landlord and state, displayed a most restricted tendency towards social differentiation. What kind of landlord class was this ? And to what manner of production relations did it give rise ?

We may first stress how central tenancy was to the working of the land in pre-1945 Japan, and how it increased in significance between 1868 and 1941. Estimates suggest that at the outset of the Meiji period some 30 percent of the cultivated area was tenanted, with about 20 percent of peasants being pure tenants and 35 percent part-tenants [*Dore*, 1959a : 17]. By 1908 the tenanted area had risen to 45 percent, and it stood at 46 percent in 1941 (although, between those two years the cultivated area had risen considerably) [*Dore*, 1959a: 19] (see [*Hiroshima*, 1981: 63, Table 1] for data on the increase in cultivated area at intervals between 1875 and 1977). In 1941, only 30 percent of cultivators owned all of the land they worked [*Dore*, 1959a : 22] : with 27 percent pure tenants and 42 percent part-tenants (*Hiroshima*, 1981: 63, Table 2] ([*Hiroshima* 1981 : 63, Table 2] provides figures on farms households by type of tenure in Japan at key dates between 1883 and 1970). There was some regional variation in the proportion of tenancy, with its greatest concentration, probably, in the north (in Tohoku and Hokuriku districts). It was, however, remarkably even in its incidence, the proportion tenanted varying, between prefectures, only from a lower limit of 33 percent (in Nagoaki) to a higher one of 59 percent (in Kagawa) [*Dore*, 1959a : 30].

A powerful landlord class existed in England, too, its power not threatened finally until the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. Like the English landlord class, the Japanese continued to appropriate surplus via rent. Unlike the English landlord class, however, it exerted a most powerful control over the peasantry : extracting very high rents and rents whose incidence actually rose significantly, up to 1902. The *kozaha* writers, indeed, placed great emphasis, in their analysis, upon rent : stressing that 'rent continued to be as high as the feudal (i.e. pre-1868) dues had been and it was still paid in kind as in feudal days' [*Yasuba*, 1975 : 66]. That seems to have been so (for figures which show this see [*Yasuba*, 1975 . 66]). We may concentrate, however, upon the post-1868 situation. According to a modern estimate, by orthodox economists, between 1878-87 and 1893-

1902 rent paid as a percentage of yields rose from 59 to 68, and stood at 58 in 1908-17 [*Ohkawa and Rosovsky*, 1964: 54]. That 58 percent was a very high figure, and so, too, the 51 percent estimated for 1916-20 [*Yasuba*, 1975 : 66).

The proportions in question were far higher than capitalist ground rent would have constituted. Moreover, and again unlike the English situation, rent, indeed, continued to be paid in kind : for rice land (the most common) usually, a fixed amount of rice, sharecropping being very unusual [*Dore*, 1959a : 19, 42-3] Both features argued against anything resembling a capitalist agriculture. The *kozaha* writers contended that here was 'a high feudal or semi feudal rent . . . (which) took all the surplus value from peasants . . . (or, indeed) more than the entire surplus value' [*Yasuba*, 1975 : 65]. This resulted in a 'standard of living . . . barely sufficient to maintain a subsistence living standard' (*loc. cit.*). A thoroughgoing capitalist agriculture, which, in order to survive, would have had to earn the average rate of profit on top of this, manifestly did not exist.

It is clear that the power of Japanese landlords, like that of Prussian Junkers and possibly to an even greater extent, prevented significant differentiation of the peasantry. We note that Japanese agriculture was characterised by a remarkably small average size of holding, which is a clear reflection of the absence of differentiation. It has been estimated that around 1880 the average size of holding was about 1 *cho*, or 2.45 acres, and that in 1939 it was roughly the same size [*Dore*, 1959a : 18].

Distribution of operated holdings was not, of course, equal. Nevertheless, holdings that were, on average, so very small were worked very predominantly by family labour. Japanese agriculture, right to the 1940s, had a remarkably small amount of wage labour :

> the number of hired labourers was never, before the last war higher than some 300,000 (out of a total of 14 million agricultural workers) and most of these were either young men and girls, half labourers and half family servants, living in and supplementing the labour of the family on a bigger-than-average peasant holding, or else casual labourers with no permanent employer [*Dore*, 1959a : 17].

Just over 2 percent of the total agricultural workforce as wage labour again points to the absence of capitalist production relations in Japanese agriculture over this period. *It was a peasant agriculture, and one*, we have suggested, in which differentiation was limited.

The Japanese transition was, in a sense, an example of 'capitalism from above', inasmuch as the processes at work—capital accumulation and the development of the productive forces—were controlled, before 1945, by the powerful landlord class. But, unlike the Prussian Junkers, Japanese landlords did *not* themselves become capitalist farmers. As has been observed :

There *were* many nineteenth century experiments in large-scale far-

> ming by enthusiastic ex-samurai newly returned from the West, but they mostly failed. It soon became obvious that the high rents which could be exacted made it more profitable for a landlord to lease his land to tenants than to cultivate it himself by means of hired labour—particularly since the techniques of rice cultivation are such that the advantages to be derived in large-scale farming from mechanization are small' [*Dore*, 1959a : 18].

They did not, to any significant degree, appropriate surplus value via the wage relation.

Ultimately, Japanese peasants threw off the landlord yoke. The way for that was, eventually, cleared by the post 1945 land reform. To that extent, some resemblance to Lenin's American path, 'capitalism from below', in its anti-feudal variant, might be construed. But the impulses from below were muted. Rich peasants did not constitute a significant force. Lenin did not visualize the possibility of such a prolonged, active, and productive role by landlords in any possible variant of an American path. Nor, indeed, is it clear that one can posit the existence of capitalist relations in the Japanese countryside. Japanese agriculture has certainly been thoroughly penetrated by capitalism, but not by capitalist relations of production.

The Japanese path is indeed a distinctive one. Its distinctiveness, moreover, is to be located in the unusual nature of its landlord class. Both *kozaha* and *ronoha* writers are, perhaps, remiss in failing to analyse adequately the nature of this class and to identify its unusual features. That has been left to more orthodox scholars. We may note two crucial, and related, characteristics.

The first is that, by contrast with landlords elsewhere in Asia, Japanese landlords were to a fairly remarkable degree non-absentee. Thus, at the end of the second world war only 18 percent of the total tenanted area was owned by absentee landlords [*Dore*, 1959a : 23]. A figure of 82 per-cent of the tenanted area being owned by non-absentee landlords is a very high one. Moreover, 'the vast majority of the really large landowners—the nearly 3,000 who owned more than 50 cho, including the 4 giants with over 1,000—were . . . resident in the same prefecture as their landholding' [*Dore*, 1959a : 29]. This meant that a high degree of personal intervention and control was possible.

Then, secondly, of the Japanese landlord of the Meiji era, it has been said that he

> presents a sharp contrast to Ricardo's wastrel type. From the out-set he devoted himself to improvements, promoted societies for the discussion of agricultural techniques, introduced winter drainage and helped sponsor the growth of superior rice strains . . . There is no evidence of any sizeable diversion of the landlords' respectable surpluses to high living or speculation. A large share of these surpluses. . . was invested outside of the primary sector' [*Ranis*, 1963 :

405] See also [*Dore*, 1959'b] [*Dore*, 1960] [*Moore*, 1969: ch. v, especially section 3]).

Unlike the English landlord class, the Japanese landlord class took a most close interest in productive activity in agriculture. Such an interest would not have been possible had they been largely absentee landlords.

Any tendency to romanticise this paragon of thrift and productive activity needs to be countered by reminders of his draconian extraction of surplus, and the brutality and ruthlessness displayed in his treatment of peasants. But the Japanese landlord class was, nevertheless, most unusual, if not unique. Without such a landlord class, with both its positive and negative features, a transition similar to the Japanese is inconceivable. No such landlord class exists in any contemporary poor country.

(b) The Taiwanese/South Korean Path

Taiwan and South Korea are frequently represented together as examples of recent, successful capitalist development, and as paradigms for other poor countries—especially Asian countries—to follow. That common success is taken to include rapid industrialisation of a desirable, labour-intensive, kind, which has changed dramatically their economic structures, away from agriculture and towards industry ; impressive agricultural growth, based, also, upon labour-intensive methods ; egalitarian distribution of income, as a result of appropriate policies in both industry and agriculture ; and a particular kind of agrarian structure.

Those who so represent the experience of these two east Asian countries are divided on how this has been achieved, and, in particular, on the role of the state. On the one hand, the apparent success is seen to derive from the application of free market economic policies, an accompanying openess to international markets, and minimal state intervention. On the other, it is portrayed as the outcome of policies which are those of 'guided market economies' [*White and Wade*, 1985 : 3 et passim], of protection where that is necessary, and pervasive government intervention.

My concern here is the limited one of identifying, briefly, the specific form of agrarian transition followed and the role of the state therein. There are, we may note, differences between Taiwan and South Korea, in the details of their agrarian realities and experience. They are not identical. The 'fundamental similarities' [*Moore*, 1985 : 133] are, however, sufficiently many and sufficiently striking to justify considering them together; as representative of a particular form of possible capitalist agrarian transition. A basic similarity derives from their common experience of Japanese colonial rule. One cannot understand the Taiwanese/South Korean path without grasping the nature of that colonial experience.

Taiwan became a colony of Japan in 1895 (conceded by China as a result of the Sino-Japanese War), and Korea in 1910 (having become a protectorate in 1905). They remained Japanese colonies until 1945. Their

emarkably similar colonial experience was crucial in setting the path of grarian transition upon which they would embark, and which would be ollowed in the post-colonial era.

Japan had been a net exporter of food until the 1890s ; she then ecame a moderate food importer, her net food imports increasing steadily hereafter ; and, by the end of the first world war, a large deficit was learly established [*Ohkawa and Rosovsky*, 1964 : 18-49, 57-58] Demand or food rose sharply during the first world war, significant rice shortages merged, and rice prices rose to levels never previously experienced. An cute problem presented itself in urban areas and there was disruption which culminated in the *Kome Sodo* or Rice Revolt, of 1918 [*Hayami and Ruttan*, 1971 : 201]. The Japanese state was shaken By the early 1920s, n response to 'the deficit in the domestic supply of foodgrains then be-oming acute in her metropolitan country' [*Ishikawa*, 1967 : 102], it had ecome 'deliberate government policy, inspired in part by the outbreak of he "rice revolt" of 1918, and strengthened in subsequent years', to constitute 'Korea and Taiwan as major rice suppliers for the Japanese domestic narket' [*Ohkawa and Rosovsky*, 1964 : 58] (cf. [*Ishikawa*, 1967 : 102]). The need for that strategy emerged from the contradictions of Japanese capitaist development.

Urban disturbance, on account of rice shortages and high rice prices, presented to the Japanese state a serious source of political instability. Japanese colonial policies in Taiwan and Korea derived from a desire to emove that source of instability More fundamentally, however, they epresented an effort to remove a serious block to capitalist accumulation, and continuing capitalist industrialisation, in Japan : a block deriving from the incomplete nature, as yet, of Japan's own capitalist agrarian transition. Thus : 'Japan was . . . faced with a choice between high rice prices, high cost of living and high wages, on the one hand, and a drain on foreign exchange by large-scale rice imports on the other. Both were unfavourable to industrial development [*Hayami and Ruttan*, 1971 : 204]. Japanese industry was not yet able to proceed via *capitalist* accumulation Access to primitive accumulation was still necessary. Japan's capitalist industrialisation might be severely constrained. A possible escape from the dilemma lay in acquiring cheap rice, and, indeed considerable surplus, from the agriculture of her colonies. Those colonies might serve as a source of Japanese accumulation.

Korea and Taiwan became the twin focus of Japanese colonial policy in this respect : policy whose 'primary purpose was to finance and support industrial development in metropolitan Japan by generating agricultural surpluses through agricultural productivity' [*Hayami and Ruttan*, 1971 : 199]. The rigours of primitive accumulation were to be imposed, but to the advantage of Japanese capitalism. The impact upon Taiwan and Korea was to be very similar. It was to create the basis for a particular form of agrarian transition in the two east Asian countries.

There was an immediate, or short-term, colonial response, and a longer-term one. Both involved crucial action by the colonial state.

In the short-run, measures were taken to ensure the release, in Korea and Taiwan, of rice for export to Japan. Millet was imported from Manchuria to Korea, and Korean peasants were forced to substitute inferior grain for rice in their diet ; and Taiwanese peasants, with a deliberate squeeze on their real income (via taxation and government monopoly sales of a variety of basic commodities) were similarly forced to subsititute sweet potatoes for rice [*Hayami and Ruttan*, 1971 : 204]. Those measures, in the immediate aftermath of the 'rice revolt' of 1918, were successful.

The question remained, however, of whether the domestic food supply problem should be solved, on a long-term basis, by Japanese agriculture itself, or from abroad by action in Japan's colonies (the possibility of solving it by commercial imports of rice, which would have absorbed scarce foreign exchange, having been ruled out). Hitherto, the strategy had been clear. Until the watershed of the 'rice revolt' : 'development efforts in Taiwan were concentrated on sugar production and little was done in Korea. It was claimed that the development of rice production in those overseas territories should be suppressed since it would foster competition against Japanese agriculture ([*Hattatsushi*, 1953-58, vol. 9 : 597] cited in [*Hayami and Ruttan*, 1971 : 204]). That now changed dramatically. Urban/industrial Japan would now be fed, to a critical degree, by cheap rice from Taiwan and Korea The longer-run reaction represented a decisive victory of urban/industrial dominant classes over those of dominant classes in agriculture : a victory analogous to that secured by the abolition of the Corn Laws in Britain. The needs of capitalist industrialisation were now paramount, even at the cost of 'harming' domestic agriculture by securing imports of cheap rice.

The means had to be devised, however, to produce the necessary cheap rice in Taiwan and Korea, to ensure its steady flow to Japan at low prices ; and, indeed, more generally, to appropriate surplus. This involved action both at the level of the productive forces and at that of the relations of production. The colonial state was assiduous in the pursuit of such action, and its efforts were attended with success.

Japanese colonial policy involved, for both Korea and Taiwan, a preoccupation with increasing agricultural growth through raising yields. The necessary development of the productive forces was seen to be that secured in Meiji Japan (1868-1911) and, in accordance with this, 'expansion in irrigation and drainage, dissemination of improved or better seeds, and spread in the use of fertilizers and manures were all energetically attempted', under the aegis of the colonial state [*Ishikawa*, 1967 : 102] (a brief treatment may be seen in [*Ishikawa*, 1967 : 94-109], and a useful account in [*Hayami and Ruttan*, 1971 : 191-214] : the most systematic treatment of pre-war Taiwanese agriculture being [*Kawano*, 1941] and of

pre-war Korean agricultural development being [*Tobata and Ohkawa*, 1937], both in Japanese) So it was that Japanese imperialism imposed 'scientific advances' upon the agricultures of Korea and Taiwan (cf. [*Amsden*, 1979 : 373]). That was a crucial base from which any developments which might take place after 1945 would proceed.

The critical role of the colonial state is to be stressed. The necessary change in the productive forces has been portrayed as a 'transfer of rice production technology from Japan to Taiwan and Korea' [*Hayami and Ruttan*, 1971 : 198] : a transmission 'induced' via the price system, through appropriate relative product and factor prices (fertilizer-price ratios etc.) ; but secured by investment by the colonial state in rice breeding research stations, geared to developing high-yielding varieties 'adaptable to the local ecologies of Taiwan and Korea' (*loc. cit.*).

That, however, is a very partial view of the nature of colonial state action. Ishikawa's apparently low-key observation that Japanese policies 'energetically' pursued 'sometimes even with the aid of the police force' [*Ishikawa*, 1967 : 102] indicates that innovations were 'induced' by means other than prices. As Amsden observes of dissemination of the 'improved technology' in Taiwan :

> By way of encouragement, an elaborate network of agricultural associations, under the aegis of the government and rich landlords, provided peasants with extension education the cooperative purchase of fertilizers, warehousing, and other services. Where persuasion failed, the police were employed to force modern techniques onto rural communities which resisted change [*Amsden*, 1979 : 346] (see also [*Myers and Ching*, 1964]).

The hand that brought about change was that of the colonial state. It was far from invisible. The approach of the post-1945 state, in both South Korea and Taiwan, would be 'in large part a contradiction of Japanese colonial practice' [*Moore*, 1985 : 136].

We are also told that 'this technology transfer involved relatively minor costs because it did not cause major changes in agrarian structure, peasant or small-scale farms based on family labour continued to be basic units of production [*Hayami and Ruttan*, 1971 : 199] Again, we are given a view which is absurdly distorted : inasmuch as, in this instance, it omits the central element in the relations of production in the countryside of colonial Korea and Taiwan, that of landlord-tenant relations, and the essential mode of surplus appropriation, rent. Thus, in Korea 'landlordism as a means of extracting rural surpluses was encouraged, with many landlords now being Japanese instead of Korean' [*Douglass*, 1983 : 186-7] (see also [*Wade*, 1983 : 14]). In Taiwan, the colonial state, starting in 1905, pursued a kind of land reform, which sought to correct some of the extreme abuses of the archaic three-level system of great landlords, tenant landlords and cultivators (or sub-tenants). But this 'left the existing social structure of landlordism intact while allowing for new farming practices

to be assimilated' [*Amsden*, 1979 : 345] (see also [*Wickberg*, 1970] [*Ho*, 1971 : 316-317]).

Just as Britain attempted to apply in India a model of agrarian structure and transition drawn from her own experience, so, in Korea and Taiwan, we have an application of the pre-1945 Japanese model. Thus, in Taiwan, in the 1930s some 65-70 percent of total agricultural production 'was produced by peasants on rented land', while 'ground rents amouting to 50 percent and occasionally as much as 70 percent of a tenant's main crop yield were common' [*Amsden*, 1979: 346 and 3451] (see also [*Grajdanzev*, 1941: 78]. And, in Korea: 'By 1938 more than 90 percent of the farming households were either full or partial tenants. Two-thirds of the full owners had farms smaller than 1 hectare. Together the tenants and small owner-cultivators comprised the vast majority of rural producers" [*Douglass*, 1983: 187]. Japanese colonial rule in Korea also saw a shift from sharecropping to fixed rents, and rents were very high: ranging, it seems, from 50 to 60 per cent of the crop [*Douglass*, 1983: 193]: again a feature very like that of pre-1945 Japan. In both cases, as in Japan, we have a powerful landlord class, with incentives to produce and invest; a peasantry among whom tenancy was rife, and who paid very high rents; and an absence of capitalist production relations.

We have seen how Japan's defeat in 1945 was followed, in that country, by a radical land reform, introduced by the conquering Americans, which abolished landlordism and produced an agrarian structure dominated by owner-cultivator family holdings. The U.S. military government in Korea introduced a similar land reform there: passed in 1949, resisted by powerful landlords; and, eventually, implemented, by 1953, in the wake of the upheaval of the Korean War [*Douglass*, 19˞3: 192-193]. Land reform entailed that landlords had 'to turn over their land to their tenants with a compensation of 150 per cent of the value of the average annual production', and there was a ceiling on holdings of 3 hectares [*Douglass*, 1983: 193].

The result was a structure of landholdings which remained virtually unchanged between the 1950s and the 1970s: with, in 1974, only 1.4 percent of farms greater than 3 hectares and landless households accounting for only 4.5 percent of total agricultural households [*Douglass*,1983:193] We are told: 'That this initial structure did not deteriorate into landlessness, tenancy or a bi-modal distribution of farm sizes common in other market-orientated Asian economies...may be partly attributed to successful enforcement of the land reform laws' [*Douglass*, 1983: 193-1944]. The writer adds that it finds part of its explanation, too, in the ability of manufacturing industry to absorb agricultural labour (*loc. cit.*). If, indeed, the land reform laws were successfully enforced, this was the result of determined state action.

In Taiwan there was, after 1945, a land reform which proceeded in three stages: in early 1949, in 1951, and in 1953. The first reduced rents (limiting land rent to 37.5 percent of the harvest of the main crop) and

strengthened tenants' security of tenure; the second distributed on easy terms public land formerly owned by the Japanese state; the land-to-the-tiller programme required landlords to dispose of land above a certain minimum size (holdings larger than 3 hectares of paddy) and sell to their tenants [*Apthorpe*, 1979: 521-522] [*Amsden*, 1979: 352] There was, as in South Korea, a land reform which moved against landlords decisively and gave to tenants ownership rights in land. And so 'there was an end to landlordism and the creation of a class of small holders' (*loc cit*), who working the land with family labour, became the overwhelmingly dominant direct producers in Taiwanese agriculture.

The Taiwanese land reform was not a response to *actual*, powerful impulses from below, in the countryside—'rural Taiwan was (not) at boiling point when land was redistributed' [*Amsden*, 1979: 352] Rather, the Nationalists, with strong encouragement from the Americans, were influenced, by their experience on' the Mainland, 'by the *potential* threat of an impoverished peasantry' (*loc. cit.*, emphasis mine): such that 'in 1948-1949 the leadership of the Kuomintang believed that without having recourse to land reform they would have no chance at all of retaining their hold over even their last province' [*Apthorpe*, 1979: 522]. We note the postulated motivation: 'to create a relatively conservative rural peasantry, leaving the government free to concentrate its efforts to preserve stability in cities' [*Wade*, 1985: 31] And we note the essential condition for success: 'an authoritarian, single party state' (*loc. cit*).

The outcome of the land reform was that 'almost overnight the countryside of Taiwan ceased to be oppressed by a small class of large landlords and became characterized by a large number of owner-operators with extremely small holdings' [*Amsden*, 1979: 352] Thus, by the early 1970s around 80 percent of the agricultural population were owner-cultivators and a further 10 percent were part-owners; a mere 6 percent of farm income accrued to landlords and moneylenders; and 90 percent of all farms were less than 2 hectares in size (*op. cit.* pp. 352-3).

If, however, the peasantry of South Korea and Taiwan had thrown off the yoke of the landlord, in each case they had found as oppressive a master in the state. In both cases successful industrial development has been secured via a continuing primitive accumulation, heavily mediated by the state. Agriculture has been the essential source of accumulation in industry, and the respective states have been effectively, pervasively and ruthlessly central to the whole process. This was so throughout the 1960s and if, thereafter, the squeeze on agriculture eased, by then agriculture's contribution had been made: capitalist industrialisation was securely based, and industry could proceed by capitalist, rather than primitive, accumulation. Moreover, the state has continued to be a potent force in the countryside of the two countries.

In South Korea, 'the flow of marketed food surplus savings and people out of agriculture has been a substantial factor in industrialisation'

[*Wade*, 1983 : 13] (see also [*Lee*, 1979]). Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the inter-sectoral terms of trade favoured industry : with prices paid to peasants held down by cheap American grain, and, more significantly, by the state, which 'forcibly procur (ed) rice from producers at prices well below the market rates' [*Moore*, 1985 : 172]. This the state did through a variety of means : 'through...obligatory deliveries; payment of land tax in kind; a rice fertiliser barter scheme ; redemption in kind (rice) of land received under land reform' (*op. cit.*. p. 173). Indeed, it has been calculated that in the thirteen years between 1948 and 1960, the purchase price of rice never equalled the cost of production, while in six years it was less than 50 percent of the market price ([*Moore* 1985: 172], citing [*USAID*, 1982: 16]). Moreover, 'this skewing of the terms of trade against agriculture supported industrialisation by encouraging a continual flow of rural migrants into the industrial labour force, thus keeping industrial wage rates low' [*Moore*, 1985 : 172].

In Taiwan, perhaps even more effectively, 'agriculture. gave industrial capital a labor force, a surplus, .foreign exchange...and an important source of demand [*Amsden*, 1979 : 363]. In the 1950s and 1960s, agricultural output grew impressively, and

> however tight the squeeze on agriculture under Japanese rule, it was even tighter under the Jiang Jie-shi administration. Whereas net real capital outflow from agriculture had increased at a rate of 3.8 per cent annually between 1911-1940, it rose on average by 10 percent annually between 1951-1960 [*Amsden*, 1979 : 353] (citing [*Lee*, 1971 : 28] Lee's work is the classic statement on this issue).

Here was primitive accumulation with a vengeance. The terms of trade were significantly unfavourable to farmers; as in South Korea, there were compulsory rice purchases by the state, repayments in kind (rice) of loans and for land sold to tenants under the land-to-the-tiller programme, the barter of fertiliser for rice, all, at prices considerably below implicit market prices; there were heavy land taxes, paid in kind, and the tax burden on farm families, at all levels of income, was considerably above that on non-farm families [*Amsden*, 1979 : 357-360].

As far as the nature of this particular capitalist agararian transition to capitalism is concerned, the following observations on Taiwan sum up crucial aspects of the South Korean/Taiwanese path :

> Fast growth and a transfer of agricultural resources to the towns.. were neither the outcome of free market forces nor the automatic result of purely technical phenomena-- the Green Revolution. Rather they reflected the structure of ownership in the countryside and state management of almost every conceivable economic activity.. Extensive application of science to agriculture appears to hinge on government control over capital accumulation. The state distributes resources equally among all peasants—as the market mechanism might not do. Hence, there have been large gains among the many. A small class of

big landowners has not yet resurfaced (nor, consequently, has a potentially cohesive source of opposition to the state). It is, then, a defining characteristic of Taiwan's agriculture that a multiplicity of small peasant proprictors exist in conformity with the bourgeois model of individualistic family farming while directing this drama is a highly centralized government bureaucracy A self-exploitative peasantry, working long hours to maximize production per hectare, and a super-exploitative state, ticking along effectively to extract the fruits of the peasantry's labour, operated hand-in-hand in Taiwan [Amsden, 1969 : 353, 355 and 362].

isely the same can be said of South Korea.

Central to this particular form of agrarian transition has been an culture. thoroughly embraced by the State [*Apthorpe*, 1979 : 520]. llords are not part of this agrarian transition, but their place has been n by the state : a state 'described as a garrison state, with administered s and very effective means of communication', which within a 'tightly rolled large-scale context leaves only a kind of residual area of mano-e for free small-scale decision-making' (*loc. cit.*). These categorisa-s are of the Taiwanese state They apply equally to the South Korean (see [*Wade*, 1983]).

The Taiwanese and South Korean examples present a set of unusual ires. Colonial rule by Japan imposed an agrarian structure and a of development of the productive forces in the image of Japan's own . The colonial state was pervasive and effective in imposing this, and curing an important source of accumulation for Japanese industry. e was not, in any sense, a capitalist agrarian transition in colonial ea or Taiwan, inasmuch as there was no capitalist agriculture, no talist industrialisation, no overall capitalist transformation. There was, e sure, continuing primitive accumulation, but that was part of Japanese talist development.

If there has been an agrarian transition, it has taken place after 1945, it is our second broad kind of transition, as identified in section 2, as the case in Japan. There is a marked absence of capitalist production tions in agriculture (i e , of the capitalist farmer/wage labour relation), agriculture has contributed significantly to capitalist industrialisation overall capitalist transformation. It is, we note, different from the 1945 Japanese agrarian transition, in the absence of a landlord class. eat of Japan in the second world war created a political hiatus in 1945, an occupying military government able to move against landlords ny of whom were Japanese) or encourage such movement. That is to the form taken has been contingent upon ... unusual political conjun-e : created by a set of exogenous forces.

If, however, there has been no landlord class to speak of, its place been taken by a repressive state. Here, assuredly, is no agrarian sition from below. It has been imposed from above. It is an agrarian

transition whose passage and sustaining have required a very powerful repressive state. If, indeed, there is a paradigm here for other A countries to emulate, it is one whose political prerequisites and coroll must be noted.

It is one, moreover, whose particular features it is difficult tc replicated in other Asian social formations. Elsewhere in Asia, w capitalist paths are being attempted, either landlord classes cont powerful (as, say, in Pakistan), or survive in somewhat weakened bu no means inconsequential form (as, say, in India). Pervasively, ur South Korea and Taiwan, highly differentiated and significantly diffe tiating peasantries are to be found. Classes from within such diffe tiating peasantries—rich peasants and capitalist farmers—have bec *part* of state power, and are not separated or excluded from it, as has b argued to be the case in South Korea and Taiwan [*Moore*, 1985 : 135 seems likely that the prospects for capitalist agrarian transition elsewl in Asia, whether of the first or second broad kinds noted, will n fruitfully be sought in the careful investigation of the nature of landl classes and of the processes of differentiation at work, than in the cont plation of the probably unique features of the South Korean/Taiwai path.

This is in no way to preempt the great diversity of possible capit agrarian transition to which attention has been drawn in section 2. / of a number of solutions to the agrarian question are possible in A while, of course, there is no guarantee of successful transition in particular case. It is, however, to reject facile analogies and sugges strategies which ignore fundamental differences in historically given objec conditions : and especially in class relationships and in the nature of state.

1. The following is a discussion in Marxist terms of the unity of nation sta For a non-Marxist treatment see [*Kuznets*, 1966 : 16-19].
2. For a brief, Marxist statement of the unity of one state—India—in whic capitalist path is being attempted cf. [*Kosambi*, 1977 : 2-7].
3. This is not to say that in the U.S.A. there was an absence of landlords. note Harriet Friedmann's reference to 'rental of land by commercial ag culturalists' and 'growth of tenancy' [*Friedmann*, 1978b : 548]. She refers reader to [*Gates*, 1973 : 255-58, 298-301] [*Bogue*, 1963 : ch III] [*Shann* 1945 : passim, esp. 161, 418] [*Gates*, 1954 : 230-294) [*Danhof*, 1969 : 88-9 The important point is not the absence of a landlord class, but, rather, th landlords did not constitute a significant or a dominating class in the U countryside.
4. Friedmann makes a crucial distinction. She refers to Arthur H. Johnso classic work, *The Disappearance of the Small Landowner*, which was fi published in 1909 [*Johnson*, 1963], and Johnson's argument that the decline 'small landowners' (i.e., peasants) can be dated from the sixteenth century,

a result of the growth of commercial agriculture. She stresses . 'small holders...are not survivors in any sense from the sixteenth century, but a new kind of household producer, a specialised commodity producer [*Friedmann*, 1978b : 549] Here are two quite distinct categories . on the one hand *peasants*, who may tend to be subsistence producers, or who produce surpluses irregularly, or perhaps as 'distress surpluses' ; and, on the other, *petty commodity producers*, who produce a regular, perhaps large surplus, on a commercial basis, and who are specialist, i e , one crop, producers

5. It has been argued that only when agriculture is *fully* 'industrialised' will wage labour take over from the family farm. The process *began* long ago, and then appeared to reach a critical stage when, in the mid-nineteenth century, mechanical reapers, threshers and cultivators were introduced, and then tractors. The result was to increase massively the amount of land a single individual could cultivate by himself, or which a family could handle [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1990 : 27-8]. This mechanisation massively increased the labour power—the productivity—of the direct producer in agriculture. Technical change also produced an immense magnification of labour power in manufacturing industry. But there is a significant difference between agriculture and manufacturing industry.

We may appreciate this by first considering agriculture and industry before the advent of the Industrial Revolution before the 'machine process' became widespread in either. In those

> pre-machine days, farming and manufacture were alike in that operations in both cases were normally done sequentially, one after another , usually by the same individual or family [*Brewster*, 1970 3].

Such was the case in pre-capitalist agriculture and in pre-capitalist, domestic or artisanal manufacturing. Mechanisation had very different effect in the two activities.

We may first consider manufacturing industry. Here, mechanisation allowed the *simultaneous* performance of the many operations in the production process. So it was that the signal contribution of the Industrial Revolution was to produce a 'revolution in the sequence in which men use their implements' [*Brewster*, 1970 4]. It was a fundamental change which unleashed an immense increase in productive powers From it there emerged, necessarily and as a precondition of the unleashing of the productive forces, the factory system and a huge expansion in the scale of operation. As has been observed 'family units of production are unthinkable in car and steel manufacture' [*Brewster*, 1970 : 3]. So it is that in 'true factory production',

> work is organised around the rhythms of machines. Such a production system means a continuity of flow from raw material to finished product, subdivision of work into detailed functions, unitary automation of control, and the continuous refinement of all these through the power source, and application of science [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1980 . 28]

In modern manufacturing industry, the essential processes can be pursued simultaneously, and, moreover, they are all mechanical In a factory, the process of production has no biological elements

In agriculture, however, mechanisation did not produce this fundamental change with respect to the production process. Substantial advance in mechanisation did not transform agriculture from an activity in which operations had to be done sequentially. It has taken long to produce the possibility

of this kind of production system. Here, the very considerable mechanisation that has taken place has had a character quite distinct from manufacturing industry, Here,

> *individual* machines have been employed to magnify the labour power or productivity of the farmer at his or her various tasks, but the overall labor process remains much as it has for centuries : plowing, planting, harvesting, thieshing It is still caught up in the rhythms of nature.. Agriculture involves both mechanical and biological processes, and whereas the former have been mechanized, the latter consists of natural rhythms of growth that are not easily changed into a machine production system [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1980 : 28].

Thus, 'the "Industrial Revolution" in agriculture is merely a spectacular change in the implements of production', but without a 'revolution in the sequence in which men use their implements' [*Brewster*, 1970 : 4].

It is the case that in the United States (and elsewhere) '*both* family and *larger-than-family units are as common in agriculture after mechanization as before*' [*Brewster*, 1970 : 3] That we have already observed But why ? The answer, or part of the answer, it is suggested, lies in the nature of the production process. Obviously, 'in agriculture machine methods remain as compatible as hand techniques with either (1) family or (2) larger-than-family units' (*Brewster*, 1970 : 5). This compatibility with family units, as the productive forces develop greatly and in marked contrast with manufacturing industry, has been explained as follows .

> (it).. lies in the fact that farm operations are as widely separated by time intervals after mechanization as before ; hence, the number of things that must be done at the same time on a farm remains as close as ever to the number of workers in an ordinary family [*Brewster*, 1970 : 5]
>
> Each of the farm operations may be mechanised, so increasing immensely the productivity of family labour. So long, however, as they cannot be performed simultaneously, then family operation remains technically possible and economically viable.

We may further say, following Mann and Dickinson [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1978] [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1980), that the foregoing unchanging character of agriculture, in response to mechanisation and great increase in the productive forces, encompasses two crucial features which make the penetration of capitalist relations more difficult in manufacturing industry The first is that 'certain spheres of agricultural production are characterised by a relatively fixed and lengthy total production time, as is the case where the crops only mature annually' [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1980 : 286] The effect of this is to constrain significantly the rate of turnover of capital, and so the rate of profit In manufacturing industry, by contrast, the rate of profit can be raised by increasing the frequency of capital turnover Then, secondly, 'some spheres of agricultural production . . . are characterised by a significant gap between total production time and labor time such that for many agricultural commodities there are lengthy periods when the application of labor is almost completely suspended as for example when the seed is maturing in the earth' (*loc cit.*). The effect of this is twofold : on the one hand it generates seasonal labour requirements, which give rise to labour supply and management problems ; on the other, it leades to underutilisation of constant capital (i.e. farm machinery), with machinery lying idle for long periods—a problem which

is particularly important given the high organic composition of capital in agriculture. The net effect of these factors is to

> make agriculture a relatively risky and hence comparatively unattractive area for profit maximisation (i.e., for capitalists). Consequently, it is not surprising that those spheres of agricultural production marked by these factors tend to be left in the hands of petty commodity producers [*Mann and Dickinson*, 1980 . 286-7].

Another possible part of the American explanation is worth pursuing. This derives from the US being, in essence, a *labour-scarce* economy. Labour, therefore, was relatively costly. Had labour been abundant, and cheap, one might well have seen petty commodity producers or many of them expanding production, in part, by resorting to increasing quantities of wage labour, along with mechanisation. The family farm might then have been driven out, or at least reduced significantly in importance, as differentiation proceeded among petty commodity producers and the capitalist wage labour relationship expanded. But labour was not abundant. It was scarce (cf. [*Habakkuk*, 1967]) on the implications of labour scarcity for America industry). Instead, one saw the steady expansion of mechanisation- moving from power-intensive to control-intensive activities [*Binswanger*, 1984] such that steady expansion of output could be achieved without increase in labour beyond the size of the family, but, instead, through increasing mechanisation. That mechanisation, we have seen, gives no necessary advantage to great size (unlike industry). In a *labour-abundant* economy, a shift to wage labour might have come far more quickly. If, then, the persistence of the family farm is a possible, likely characteristic of an 'agrarian transition from below', and if there is any validity in this argument, that persistence may be especially expected where (a) labour is scarce and (b) the appropriate form is taken by the productive forces.

These are plausible parts of an explanation of the persistence of family farms in the United States. But, as I suggest in the text, they do not constitute a total explanation. Such an explanation, I suggest, must, in part, run in terms of the nature of the state and the manner of state intervention in the countryside.

In the current debate in the United States, the demise of the family farm is said to be contingent upon the ability of technical progress finally to learn

> how to make nature step to the tune of the capitalist clock, that is how to revolutionize the biological processes themselves, not just how to use machinery or fertilizer to augment natural processes. For most types of agricultural production in the United States (especially those where the family farm predominates) technical advances have not yet succeeded in completely wedding mechanical and biological processes into factory type production [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1980 : 29].

One area in which substantial success has been achieved is in animal husbandry: with respect to cattle for meat production, dairying, and poultry, in each of which, large-scale factory-like production, with wage labour is widespread [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1980 : 29-30]. Then, in California agriculture is 'more a system of "factories in the field" than one of family farms, owing to the degree of mechanization and the use of hired labour': an interesting example of 'how mechanical and genetic engineering has transformed production' being tomato production, which has been highly industrialised [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1980 : 27].

The authors of a recent work tell us :

> Although the family farm still predominates in America, it is conceivable that within a decade agricultural communities will be characterised by a polarized class structure, dominated by a small but powerful agrarian bourgeoisie on one side, with a large number of part-time farmers, semi-proletarians, on the other [*Burbach and Flynn*, 1980 : 22].

Lenin could hardly have anticipated that still, in the 1980s, almost a century after he began to write of the 'American path', the demise of the family farm, and its replacement by the dominance of capitalist/wage labour, would be a matter of *prediction* and debate, rather than a wholly accomplished fact.

6. See, for example, the arguments of Mann and Dickinson, outlined in footnote 5.
7. I am here quoting from Kay's Introduction, which was inadvertently left out of the article in question.

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ATIUR RAHMAN*

Differentiation of the Peasantry in Bangladesh : 1950s to 1980s

Introduction : Situating the Problem

THE ECONOMIC backwardness of most Third World countries including Bangladesh is to a great extent explained by the unresolved agrarian question. The manner in which the latter is resolved in a way determines the way out of the impasse called underdevelopment. Given the different experien-ces of even this, any analysis of the agrarian question necessitates :

> ...delineation of the complex and varied means whereby capitalis became the dominant mode of production in agriculture : growir out of simple commodity production, here via the landlord class an there via a peasantry which gradually became differentiated (s providing the extremes, a stratum of rich peasants who ultimatel become capitalist farmers and a stratum of poor peasants who wer transformed into agricultural labourers or who joined the urba proletariat); slowly penetrating the countryside, developing the force of production in manifold ways and raising agricultural producti veness; eroding feudal and semi-feudal relations of production an replacing them with the stark opposition of a class of capitalis farmers and one of wage labourers. This, the agrarian transition tc capitalism (which, to be brief, we may call the agrarian transition), represented a *conditio sine qua non* for resolving of the agrarian question.[1]

Thus, in order to locate the possible terrain of the resolution of the agrarian question in the specific context of Bangladesh, it is imperative that one should investigate the composition of its peasantry and assess whether that composition is changing.[2]

Early Marxists, especially Engels, at the end of the nineteenth century, investigated these issues purely out of political concern. They were preoccupied with the problem of how to capture political power in European countries in which capitalism was developing apace, but had not yet, as it was expected ultimately to do, swept away all before it in the countryside. It is due to this underdeveloped nature of capitalism, that Marx and Engels stressed the political apathy of the peasants : an apathy born, in part,

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of their objective material condition.[3] However by the 1890s, capitalism had matured to an extent where new conditions were developing in the countryside. These new conditions were ones in which differentiation was proceeding apace and new class relations were emerging. Here came in Kautsky and Lenin, who were equally political in their concerns.[4]

Both Kautsky and Lenin were addressing the agrarian question as a peasant question—how far capitalism, to the extent it was developing, had not eliminated the peasantry as a crucial political force. For Lenin, the peasantry no longer constituted an 'integral class', a view which also loomed large in Kautsky's analysis. This Kautsky-Lenin approach to the agrarian question is the one which is most widely taken into account today, in those poor countries where the capitalist path is being attempted.

According to Engels, it was the 'small peasant' who occupied the space at the end of the differentiation spectrum. Capitalism had not yet eliminated him. He was a 'future proletarian' [Engels, 1970: 460], occasionally selling his labour under economic pressure. Lenin's *poor peasant* occupied the same position in the differentiation spectrum. But his poor peasant was definitely different from Engel's 'small peasant'. The pressures of competition, impoverishment and indebtedness had clearly driven him into a situation to sell his labour power, not exceptionally as implied by Engels, but regularly in order to ensure his survival. He is much closer to the status of a proletarian than is his counterpart in the Engels schema.

Lenin's middle peasant is much closer to Engel's small peasant. He earned just enough to meet the family expenditure, hiring out labour more than what he hired in. Theirs is a very precarious position—unstable and transitional between that of the peasant bourgeoisie and the proletariat [Lenin, *op. cit.*, 79-80].

Lenin's *rich peasants* constitute a rural bourgeoisie, quite distinct from the middle peasantry. They are completely commercialised, producing primarily for the market. They hire in labour regularly. They are not fully-formed capitalist farmers, but are on the way to becoming so. They are more productive and hence more stable economically, enjoying a kind of economic independence.

Such, in brief, is Lenin's differentiation schema. He saw differentiation clearly in class terms (hence the name social differentiation) in direct opposition to the *narodnik* or populist viewpoint The latter saw no class formation taking place within the peasantry, and therefore no social differentiation and no development of capitalism. They saw the continuing reproduction of an archetypal pristine peasantry. They preferred to bet on them for the successful development of Russia : not via *acapitalist* but through a populist path. There soon developed a new school of such scholars, led by AV Chayanov, who viewed differentiation as a demographic phenomenon without any process of class formation, in the Marxist sense, taking place.

The debate between Lenin and Chayanov, or between those wl embrace a position broadly alike to Lenin or Chayanov has not lost its rel vance nor its force in the context of poor countries like Bangladesh.[5] Tl issues pertaining to differentiation of the peasantry thus posed continue call for careful scrutiny in differing concrete situations. And this is wh has been attempted in this paper.

Differentiation of the Peasantry in Bangladesh

The major hypothesis of Leninist class differentiation postulates a acute concentration of the means of production over time in a few han with simultaneous dispossession of the same from the majority of tl owners. Land, being the principal means of production, will naturally g the greater emphasis. The analysis primarily emanates from the dat relating to ownership and use of land in two of our study villages (one i the district of Jamalpur using a larger quantum of modern inputs and th other in Bogra district with relatively lower usage of HY inputs) ofte supplemented by national statistics. Information on the ownership of othe means of production and the changing social relations of production wi be used whenever necessary in order to grasp the process of differentiatior Even though, we concentrate on three cut-off periods, the 1950s, '70s an '80s while focussing on land relations, we often go back to the 1940s t construct the appropriate historical canvas.

The Evolving Agrarian Structure

The Bengal peasantry had been differentiated even during the British period and a distinct group of surplus Muslim *raiyats* had come into being. Various means of exploiting the peasantry such as money-lending, trading etc., were utilized and the stability of the peasantry was affected consequently. Thus a process of disintegration had already started even before the partition of 1947.

By 1938 the Floud Commission recorded the high degree of disintegration and differentiation of the Bengal peasantry. Five acres of land were considered by the Commission as the minimum size of a viable holding ; substantial sections of the peasantry were found to be living below subsistence level according to this yardstick. A sample survey carried out by the Commission in 1938 found that 74.6 per cent of the households in rural Bengal had holdings below the subsistence level ; only 25.4 per cent had more than 5 acres of land.[6] The survey also showed that 45.8 per cent of the households had less than 2 acres of land ; while only 7.7 per cent households had holdings larger than 10 acres.

It also showed that the percentage of families mainly dependent c share-cropping or agricultural labour for their livelihood in 1938-39 wa 31 per cent. The districts which exceeded the average were Khulna (5 per cent), Pabna (41 per cent), Faridpur (39 percent), Dinajpur (37 pe cent), Rajshani (36 per cent) and Rangpur (32 per cent).[7] The findings c

the Floud Commission thus support the proposition that "surplus" Muslim peasants existed even before the partition of India.

In the early forties, the presence of rich Muslim *jotdars* in North Bengal was mentioned by Bell[8] while writing the Settlement Report on

Table I

Pattern of Distribution of Landownership and Importance of Sharecropping in 1944-45

Landownership groups	Percentage of households	Percentage of land owned	Percentage share of rented out land	Percentage share of rented in land	Percentage owned land sharecropped out	Percentage cultivated land sharecropped in
Own only homestead land or landless	29.9	1.6	nil	26.5	nil	97.3
Own upto 1.0 acre	19.5	4.6	2.9	18.7	15.3	54.3
1.01 to 3.0 acres	25.1	18.5	9.0	29.6	11.8	27.3
3.01 to 5.0 acres	10.3	15.0	9.6	12.9	15.7	16.1
Over 5.0 acres	15.3	60.3	78.4	12.2	36.1	5.5
All households	100.0	100.0	100.0	100 0	27.0	21 2

Source : Hossain, 1981 (Table V, p. 19) compiled from Abdullah 1976 Table VI, p. (105).

Dinajpur. Bell noted a three-tier pattern of agrarian relations in the rural areas. According to Bell, rural Bengali society had three distinct classes.[9]

(i) Class I—landowners (*zamindars, taluqdars, patnidars etc.*) and rich farmers (*jotdars, gatindars, haoladars*) (ii) Class II—self-sufficient peasants (*raiyats*) and (iii) Class III—sharecroppers (*bargadars*) and agricultural labourers (*krishans*).

The differentiation among the Bengal peasantry was also confirmed by Ishaque's plot to plot survey (1944-45) of 5,284 random households in rural Bengal.[10] The results of the survey have been recalculated by Abdullah.[11] Abdullah's tables have been recompiled by Hossain [12] While reorganizing Ishaque's data, Hossain concludes that only 15 3 per cent of rural households owned more than 5.0 acres of land (compared to 25.4 per cent in 1938, according to the Floud Commission report) and they owned more than 60 per cent of the total land. However, they gave out more than a third of their land to sharecroppers and because of that, their share

of cultivated land was not as high as owned land. They accounted for about 78 per cent of the total sharecropped land. On the other hand, mainly the poor were sharecroppers. Table I gives further details.

Another study by the Indian Statistical Institute (1946) also revealed the unequal agrarian structure of Bengal in the 1940s. It found that in rural Bengal, only 11.5 per cent of the total households owned 5 acres or more.[13] Compared to the findings of the Land Revenue Commission of 1938, the findings of both Ishaque's survey and the Indian Statistical Institute survey bring to light changes in landholding pattern in rural Bengal leading to increasing concentration of ownership. Relying on these surveys and his own field studies in six villages of Bengal, Mukherjee, like Bell, identifies three distinct classes of peasantry in Bengal during the last stage of British rule in India.[14] These classes were,

(1) Class I, comprising of the landed gentry, viz, the landholders, and supervisory farmers i.e. of the subinfeudatory landlords, and the prosperous non-cultivating or supervisory farmers. They formed the top most group in the villages.

(2) Class II, comprising mainly of the self-sufficient peasantry ; with artisans and traders also included in this class.

(3) Class III, comprising of the remaining occupational groups, viz. the sharecroppers, agricultural labourers, serviceholders and others.

Class I formed the landed gentry and thrived on the concentration of land and use of others' labour. According to a survey of the Indian Statistical Institute (1946), this class accounted for only 4 per cent of rural households in Bengal but owned 11 per cent of the total land.

Class II, comprising mainly self-sufficient and self-cultivating peasants with proprietory rights on land plus more or less self-sufficient artisans and traders accounted for 42 per cent of the total number of households and owned 68 per cent of the total land (see 1946 survey).

Class III had very little or no land of their own and were primarily dependent on Class I for their living.

According to Mukherjee,[15] the rural economy of Bengal in the British period was dependent on two sets of production relations one between classes I and III as owners and non-owners of the means of production (mainly land) and users and suppliers of labour, respectively, and the other constituted by class II as owners of the means of production and users of their own labour. Mukherjee holds that class II was the only form of production relations in rural Bengal in the pre-British period and the introduction of the Permanent Settlement in 1793 made possible the emergence of classes I and II.[16]

In the relationships between Class I and Class II those between land-holders and sharecroppers predominated rather than that between a supervisory farmer and an agricultural labourer. Mukherjee[17] explained this in two ways : a sharecropper was assured of employment throughout the year, this did not hold true in the case of an agricultural labourer

and a sharecropper enjoyed more or less the same social status as a rayat (Class II peasant) while an agricultural labourer was socially ranked below a class II peasant.

This new relation of production in agriculture allowed unhindered exploitation of the landless and near-landless by the landed gentry. The process of concentration of land and agricultural income in the hands of class I was accelerated. Sharecropping and cultivation by hired labour continued to grow at the expense of self-cultivation without any improvement in the technique of production.

However, during the final phase of British rule in India, the arbitrary powers of zamindars and their subinfeudatory agents came under attack from various quarters—the increasing prominence of urban professional classes, the division of holdings due to inheritance and population growth and the increasing socio-political consciousness of the peasantry, all combined to make irrational exercise of power increasingly difficult.

Communal tension also became a cause of worry for Hindu zamindars.[18] The Floud Commission had recommended the abolition of the zamindari system and its replacement by a settlement between the state and the cultivators.[19] The zamindari system more or less collapsed in the years immediately preceeding the partition of India in 1947. The departure of almost all Hindu zamindars and rich raiyats for India after 1947 created opportunities for rich Muslim peasants to expropriate the land vacated by them.

To legalise the de facto expropriation of land by Muslim jotedars and rich peasants, the East Bengal Legislative Assembly passed the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act (EBSATA) on February 16, 1950.[20] However, the process of implementation of the Act was insufficient to ensure redistribution of land, so that ultimately concentration of agricultural land remained at the previous level, and in some cases even increased.

Given this historical background we may now look into the agrarian structure of our study villages.

The changing landholding pattern in the study villages

Village-I was not affected significantly in terms of the distribution of ownership rights of land by the Act of 1950. There were no resident zamindars or their agents in the village. The raiyats just became maliks—a change of status which did not alter in effect the distribution of holdings. In a few cases, the rich Muslim raiyats gained some land from their Hindu counterparts who decided to leave the village (or the neighbouring villages) to settle in India. The price paid for this land was, indeed, very nominal, as always is the case with this type of distress sale. But drastic changes were observed in village-2. There were two small *zamindars* (in fact jotedars) in this village enjoying titles to at least three hundred acres of land (not necessarily within the boundary of village-2 in the pre-EBSATA

period. They lost their control over the zamindari lands and became ordinary landowners. Their raiyats, who actually cultivated the lands earlier, became the maliks (i.e. land owners).

Significant changes occured in the land-holding pattern in both villages in the 1960s and 1970s. The concentration of land in the hands of a few was seen to have increased over time in both villages, though the magnitude of that concentration varied from village to village.

The mid-1960s saw the begining of the 'Green Revolution' in rural Bangladesh. But none of our study villages seems to have been affected by that early phase of the 'Green Revolution'.

The war of liberation in the early 1970s brought many changes in rural Bangladesh. The first post-liberation Government announced a new land reform bill. More modern agricultural inputs were made available to the farmers. Village-1 seems to have benefited more from this later phase of the 'Green Revolution' and has consequently undergone the tremendous stress and strain of income inequalities that usually follow such an inflow

Table II

Village I : The Growth in the Number of Households Population and the Size of Landownership 1951-1981

Items	1951	1972	1981	Percentage change (1951-1972)	Percentage Annual change (1951-1972)	Percentage change (1972-1981)	Percentage Annual change (1972-1981)
No. of HH	138	173	200	+25.36	+1.20	+15.60	+1.73
Population	566	873	1183	+54.24	+2.85	+35.51	+3.94
Average household size (members per household)	4.10	5.04	5.91	+22.92	+1.09	+17.26	+1.91
Average land owned for HH (in acres)	4.12	2.66	2.18	−35.43	−1.68	−18.04	−2.00
Average land owned per capita (in acres)	*1.00*	*0.52*	*0.37*	*−48.00*	*−2.28*	*−40.54*	−4.50

of modern inputs.[21] Village-2, untill very recently, witnessed little of this inflow. At the same time, population has increased quite fast in both villages during the last three decades and the impact of this demographic explosion can be seen in the declining per capita share of land.

These conclusions have been drawn from the data collected during our fieldwork in the early 1980s. A recent quick resurvey (1985) also supports these trends. Table II and III provide a general picture of the changing pattern of land-man relations over the period 1951-1981. From tables II and III a steady increase in the number of households and population in both villages with a simultaneous decline in average land owned per household and per capita can be noticed.

Table III

Village 2 : The Growth in the Number of Households Population and the Size of Landownership : 1951-1981

Items	1951	1972	1981	Percentage Change (1951-1972)	Percentage Annual change (1951-1972)	Percentage Change (1972-1981)	Percentage Annual change (1972-1981)
No. of HH	51	81	121	+58.82	+2.80	+49.38	+5.48
Population	220	379	656	+72.27	+3.44	+73.08	+8.12
Average HH size (members per HH)	4.31	4.68	5.42	+ 8.58	+0 41	+15.81	+7 75
Average land owned per HH (in acres)	5.89*	3.78	2.76	−35.82	−1.70	−26.98	−2.99
Average land owned per capita (in acres)	1.36	0.81	0.51	−40.44	−1.92	−37.03	−4.11

Note : HH = Household

*Mukherjee found the average land owned perhousehold for the Interior villages (village-2 was one of them) as 6.1 acres in 1942.

The decline in per household and per capita land owned was worse in the 1970s than the previous period in both villages. The per household land owned declined to almost half between 1951-81. Whereas the annual

decline between 1951-1972 for village-1 was (—) 1.68 percent, that between 1972-81 was (—) 2.00 per cent. The corresponding rates for village-2 were (—) 1.70 percent and (—) 2 99 percent respectively.

The decline in the per capita figures was even more drastic. Though the length of the period between 1972-81 was almost half of that between 1951-72, the percentage decline in per capita landownership size in 1970s was almost equal to the percentage decline in the 1950s and 1960s taken together in both the villages. Whereas the annual rate of decline in per capita terms for Village-1 between 1951-1972 was (—) 2.28 per cent, that between 1972-81 was (—) 4.50 per cent. The corresponding figures for village-2 were (—) 1.92 per cent and (—) 4.14 per cent. The 1985 resurvey results also support this trend. In village-1, we found that within a span of about four years, the number of households increased to 269, population increased to 1258, average family size being 6.02, the per household land declined to 1.94 acres and the per capita land fell to .32 acres. Thus in between 1981 to 1985, the growth in the number of households was (+) 4.50 per cent, with the annual change being (+) 1.13 per cent. The growth in population was (+) 6.34 per cent, annual growth being(+)1.59 per cent. The family size increased by (+) 1.86 percent, slightly less than the 1970s. The other two variables, related to land declined significantly. The average landowned per household declined by (--) 2.75 per cent (annually). The per capita landowned declined by (—) 3.38 per cent annually.

Thus it can be seen that the situation has been deteriorating secularly. However, this overall picture can be quite misleading. Not all households suffered economic decline. In fact, a section gained economically by acquiring more land through buying, mortgaging and renting in land. If the households are distributed into nine empirical categories, there emerges a highly differentiated picture. Tables IV and V provide the heterogeneous image. These two tables make clear a wide range of changes that have been underway in the two villages since the early 1950s.

The proportion of households in the landless and land-poor groups swelled whereas that in the land-rich groups, in fact, ebbed over the last three decades. The proportion of households owning less than 0.50 acres land (including the landless ones) in village-1 increased sharply from about 19 percent in 1951 to about 31 percent in 1972 and finally to 41 per cent in 1981. It jumped to 48 79 percent in 1985. The corresponding figures for village 2 are 12 percent, 16 percent and 41 percent. Though the exact figures for village 2 for 1985 are not available, the impressionistic view is that the figure increased less rapidly than that of village-1.

The burden of supporting additional mouths by the marginal households also increased steadily during the period under consideration. The above two groups together constituted about 14 per cent of the population of village-1 in 1951. The proportion increased to 26 per cent in 1972 and to 30 per cent in 1981 and finally to 33.36 per cent in 1985. The corres-

Table IV

Village 1 : Land-man Relations by Landownership Groups : 1951-1981

Land Ownership Groups (acres)	No. of households			Population			Total land owned (acres)		
	1951	1972	1981	1951	1972	1981	1951	1972	1981
1. 0	4 (2.90)	8 (4.62)	12 (6.00)	27 (4.77)	34 (3.89)	50 (4.23)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
2. .01— .50	15 (10.86)	45 (26.01)	70 (35.00)	55 (9.72)	196 (22.45)	301 (25.44)	2.20 (0.38)	12.49 (2.71)	13.39 (3 06)
3. .51— 1.50	14 (10.14)	26 (15.03)	37 (18.50)	37 (6.53)	119 (13.63)	202 (17.07)	12.08 (2.12)	27.24 (5.92)	37.52 (8.59)
4. 1.51— 2.50	26 (18.84)	37 (21.39)	33 (16.50)	86 (15.19)	190 (21.76)	201 (16.99)	49.93 (8.77)	75 44 (16.38)	67.00 (15.33)
5 2.51— 3.50	16 (11.59)	18 (10.40)	12 (3.00)	61 (10.78)	100 (11.45)	98 (8.28)	45.16 (7.94)	54.33 (11.84)	35.42 (8.11)
6. 3.51— 5.00	27 (19.57)	18 (10.40)	14 (7.00)	117 (20.67)	98 (11.22)	108 (9.13)	113 87 (20.00)	76 24 (16.56)	62.97 (14.41)
7. 5.01— 7.50	13 (9.42)	7 (4.05)	7 (3.50)	60 (10.60)	35 (4.01)	72 (6.09)	75.02 (13.18)	46.22 (10.04)	44.96 (10.29)
8. 7.51—10.00	10 (7.25)	7 (4.05)	9 (4.50)	55 (9.72)	44 (5.04)	93 (7.86)	81.82 (14.38)	60.70 (13 18)	81.00 (18.54)
9. 10.01+	13 (9.42)	7 (4.05)	6 (3.00)	68 (12.01)	57 (6.54)	58 (4.90)	189 00 (33 21)	107 50 (23.35)	94.66 (21.66)
All groups	138 (99.99)	137 (100.00)	200 (100.00)	556 (99.99)	873 (99.99)	1183 (99.99)	569.08 (99.99)	460.36 (99.98)	436.93 (99.99)

Note : Figures in the paraentheses. show percentages. Percentage figuers do not always add up to 100 because of rounding off error.

Table V

Village 2 : Land-man Relations by Landownership Groups : 1951-1981

Land Ownership Groups (acres)	No. of households			Population			Total land owned (acres)		
	1951	1972	1981	1951	1972	1981	1951	1972	1981
1. 0	3 (5.88)	11 (13.58)	29 (23.97)	7 (3.18)	39 (10.29)	118 (17.99)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
2. 0.01— 0.50	3 (5.88)	3 (3.70)	21 (17.35)	10 (4.54)	12 (3.17)	95 (14.48)	1.12 (0.37)	1.05 (0.34)	6.39 (1.90)
3. 0.51— 1.50	8 (15.69)	13 (16.05)	15 (12.40)	30 (13.62)	53 (13.98)	85 (12.96)	8.24 (2.74)	11.03 (3.60)	16 73 (5.00)
4. 1.51— 2.50	3 (5.88)	17 (20.99)	18 (14.87)	12 (5.45)	65 (17.15)	92 (14.02)	6.13 (2.04)	33 68 (11.31)	36.03 (10.76)
5. 2.51— 3.50	5 (9.80)	11 (13.58)	14 (11.57)	18 (8.18)	45 (11.87)	75 (11.43)	14.78 (4.91)	33.08 (10.78)	42.45 (12.80)
6. 3.51— 5.00	7 (13.72)	10 (12.35)	9 (7.44)	24 (10.91)	51 (13.45)	55 (8.38)	32.21 (10.71)	44.88 (14.63)	36.60 (10.94)
7. 5.01— 7.50	7 (13.72)	8 (9.87)	7 (5.78)	28 (12.73)	46 (12.14)	49 (7.37)	42.33 (14.04)	52.09 (16.98)	43.62 (13.03)
8. 7.51—10.00	6 (11.76)	2 (2.47)	2 (1.65)	25 (11.36)	13 (3.43)	16 (2.44)	51.89 (17.25)	16.57 (5.40)	17.66 (5.27)
9. 10.01+	9 (17.65)	6 (7.40)	6 (4.96)	66 (30.00)	55 (14.51)	71 (10.82)	144.15 (47.92)	113.31 (36.95)	134.80 (40.28)
All Groups	51 (99.98)	81 (99.99)	121 (99.99)	220 (99.97)	379 (99.99)	656 (99.99)	300.15 (98.98)	306.69 (99.99)	334.64 (99.98)

Note : Figures in the parentheses show percentages. Percentage figures do not always ndd up to 100 because of rounding off error.

ponding, population figures for village-2 are 7 per cent, 13 per cent and 32 percent.

But the total land owned by the poorest section of the peasantry did not increase at the same pace. In village-1, they owned 0.38 per cent of the total land in 1951. This increased to 2.37 per cent in 1972 and 3.06 per cent in 1981. It remained more or less same in 1985, although the proportion of households in this bracket increased quite significantly. The corresponding figures, for village-2 are 0.37 per cent, 0.34 per cent and 1.90 per cent. Most of this was, in fact, homestead land.

The decline in their economic position becomes clearer if the per household and per capita figures are considered. The per capita figure declined more than the per household figure. The extent of this decline was greater during the period 1972-81 than during 1951-72. While per capita figures declined in general, the degree of dispossession was much more severe in the landpoor groups. This holds true for both the villages.

Groups 8 and 9 together constituted about 10 per cent of households of village-1 and owned about 47 per cent of the land in 1951. By 1972 though the proportion of households in these two groups had declined by half, their share of land had declined by only 11 per cent. By 1981, they constituted only 7.50 per cent of total households and owned more than 40 per cent of total land. In 1981 while they constituted only 6.21 per cent of total households, they owned as much as 42 per cent of total land. Similarly in village-2 groups 8 and 9 together comprised about 29 per cent of households in 1951. This proportion declined drastically to about 10 per cent in 1972 and about 7 per cent in 1981. Although the proportion in total households shrank, their share of owned land did not decrease proportionately. These two groups together owned about 65 per cent of the land in 1951.[22] Their share dropped to 42 per cent in 1972 and again increased to 45 per cent in 1981.

The per household figures increased in both the villages. However, there has been some decline in the per capita land due to overall increase in the population. But on the whole positive indices of economic strength can be noticed in these land-rich groups.

In the middle groups (for example, groups 5, 6 and 7) there has been a significant decline in the proportion of households and also the share of land. These are the households which have been under tremendous pressure to disintegrate and in most cases, the disintegrated households moved down the scale.

It is claimed by some scholars (see for example Hossain, 1981[23]) that although there exists considerable inequality in the distribution of owned land, land is generally cultivated in small and medium sized family based holdings. They argue that the majority of small landowners rent in land from others to cultivate a larger size of holding than their ownership of cultivable land would permit. Similarly, many large landowners are found to have rented out a significant part of their holdings to others and culti-

ate a holding smaller in size than the actual size of their ownership holding. Also, there are many landowners, especially the poorer ones, who rent out their entire holding and engage in non-farming activities. Because of this pattern of land transfer through the rental market, Hossain argues that the diitribution of operated land is much less unequal than the distribution of owned land.

But our data do not entirely support this suggestion. In fact even after the effective adjustments[24] of rental shares, the distribution of land remains highly unequal in both villages. When we examine the command over operated and effective land the distribution of land, though less skewed, is not significantly different from the ownership pattern. The situation was slightly better in the 1950s for the land poor groups, but it has worsened in the 1970s and 1980s As for the richer groups (say group 8 and 9) there was an initial decline in overall share in the period between 1951-72 (of course, the number of households also declined in these groups), but it has been steadily increasing since the 1970s. Of course, the situation is relatively less skewed in the less developed village-2.

So, our field work findings indicate that inequality has been worsening over time and concentration of land in the hands of a few households has been gaining momentum.

The relative shares in different categories of land of two polar groups of households (i) the bottom 60 per cent of the households and (ii) the top 10 per cent of the households, which roughly correspond to the poor and prosperous peasantry was computed.

Table VI shows the changes in the relative shares of those two polar groups for village-1, Table VII shows the changes for village-2 These two tables show the secular decline in the shares of the bottom 60 per cent of households and dramatic rise in the share of top 10 per cent of households in both villages.

While the bottom 60 per cent of the households of village-1 owned 24.35 per cent of total land in 1951, their share hand fallen to only 11.00 per cent by 1981. It fell further to 8.28 per cent in 1985. Similarly in village-2, the bottom 60 per cent of households owned 24.53 per cent of land in 1951 and the share had been reduced to only 10.90 per cent in 1981. The same is true for other categories of land, except in the case of homestead land. The rate of decline has been sharper in the 1970s. Within a short span of thirty years, the share of the bottom section of the peasantry was reduced to half of what they had initially. The slight increase in the share of homestead land of the poorer section may be due to the sheer increase in the number of households in this group. Most households would sell off their homestead land only at the very last moment. Hence, as more households came down to the rank of the bottom 60 per cent of the households, their share in the total homestead land also increased.

Vt the other end of the spectrum the top 10 percent of the households

Table VI

Village 1 : Relative Shares of Different Categories of Land by (a) Bottom 60 per cent and (b) Top 10 per cent of Households : 1951-1981

Land categories	Share of bottom 60 per cent			Share of top 10 per cent		
	1951	1972	1981	1951	1972	1981
Owned land	24.35	18.61	12.00	34 81	41.25	47.85
Owned cultivable land	24.48	18.34	9.93	32.91	41.03	50.28
Operated land	29.57	25.54	14.71	28.37	32.87	45.70
Effectiveland	27.93	22.44	13.08	31.32	36.92	47 99
Homestead land	23.31	23.79	34.51	41.80	43.87	21.42
			Percentage Changes			
	1951-72	*1972-81*		*1951-72*	*1972-81*	
Owned land	—5.54	— 6.18		+6.44	+ 6.81	
Owned cultivable land	—6.14	— 8.41		+7.12	+ 9.25	
Operated land	—4.03	—10.83		+4.50	+12.83	
Effective land	—8 88	— 9.30		+ 5.60	+11.07	
Homestead land	+0.48	+10.72		+2.04	−22.42	
			Index			
	1951	*1972*	*1981*	*1951*	*1972*	*1981*
Owned land	100.00	77.31	49.37	100.00	118.50	137.46
Owned cultivable land	100.00	74 97	40.56	100 00	120.99	148.27
Operated land	100.00	86.37	40.74	100.00	115.86	161.98
Effective land	100.00	80,34	46.83	100.00	117.84	153.22
Homestead land	100.00	102.05	148.04	100 00	104.95	51.29

have been gaining land consistently and the pace of enlargement of their holdings has been greater in the 1970s in both the villages.

In village-1, while the top 10 per cent of households owned 34.81 per cent of total land in 1951, the share had increased to 47.85 per cent in 1981. It has further increased to 54.18 per cent in 1985. In village 2, the change has been even more spectacular. The top 10 per cent owned 29.69 per cent of total land in 1951 ; their share had risen to 53 83 per cent in 1981.

But the greatest change is to be noticed in the case of operated land. In both villages, the richer section of the peasantry has been enlarging its share of operated holdings over time. This section operated 31.32 per cent in 1951 in village-1. It increased to 47.99 per cent in 1981 and further to 49.47 percent in 1985. In village-2, the corresponding shares were 25.46 per cent and 51.04 per cent.

Table VII

Village 2 : Relative Shares of Different Categories Land by (a) Bottom 60 per cent and (b) Top 10 per cent of Households : 1951-1981

Land categories	Share of Bottom 60 per cent			Share of top 10 per cent		
	1951	1972	1981	1951	1972	1981
Owned land	24.53	19.32	10.90	29.69	42.34	53.82
Owned cultivable land	24.77	18.29	10.57	29.31	43.54	54.03
Operated land	31.20	23.28	13.70	21.89	38.11	49.89
Effective land	27.95	26.86	13.03	25.46	40.76	51.84
Homestead land	22.17	31.59	13.21	33.47	26.20	52.60
	Percentage Changes					
	1951-72	*1972-81*		*1951-72*	*1972-81*	
Owned land	−5.21	− 8.42		+12.65	+11.51	
Owned cultivable land	−6.48	− 7.72		+14.23	+10.49	
Operated land	−7.92	− 9.58		+16.22	+11.78	
Effective land	−7 09	− 7.83		+15.30	+10.20	
Homestead land	+9.92	−18.38		− 7.77	+26.40	
	Index					
	1951	*1972*	*1981*	*1951*	*1972*	*1981*
Owned land	100.00	78.76	44.13	100 00	142.60	181.32
Owned cultivable land	100.00	73.83	12.67	100.00	148,55	184.34
Operated land	100.00	74.61	43 91	100.00	174.04	227.91
Effective land	100.00	74.63	46.62	100.00	160.09	200 47
Homestead land	100.00	142 49	59.98	100.00	78.28	159.15

It has been argued that richer peasants in north Bengal (the region in which village-2 lies) have been keen to rent out most of their land to tenants while they themselves would do very little cultivation as supervisiory farmers.[25] This was, no doubt, true in the 1950s and earlier. [26]But the situation began to change in the late 1960s as the drive for modernisation gained pace and the pressure on land also increased with the growth of family members. As our latest field revisit (1985) indicates, village-2 has also recently been circuited into HYV crops cultivation through mechanical irrigation alongwith all of its consequences.

Thus it may be summarized that concentration of land in the hands of a few has increased in both of our study villages. Simultaneously, a tremendous increase in the growth of landlessness was observed.

The growing landlessness

Not only our micro study, many of the macro studies also lend

Table VIII

The Pattern of Distribution of Landownership 1977 to 1979

Land ownership groups (acres)	Number of households			Percentage of households			Percentage of land owned		
	1977	1978	1979	1977	1978	1979	1977	1978	1979
Upto 1.0	6933	7144	7781	58.5	59.4	60.5	9.3	8·3	8.8
1.01 — 2.0	1947	1830	1937	16.4	15.2	15.1	14.4	12.8	13.4
2.01 — 5.0	2069	5037	2159	17.5	16.9	16 8	33.3	30.5	32.0
5.01 — 10.0	670	701	706	5.7	5.8	5.5	33.3	22.9	23.2
10.01 & above	227	320	283	1.9	2.7	2.2	19.7	25.5	2[illegible].6
Total number of households	11849	12032	12866						
Total land owned (million acres)				100.0 (19.4)	100.0 (20 8)	100.0 (20.5)	100.0	100.0	100 0

Source : M. Hossain, 'A Note on the Trend of Landlessness in Bangladesh', (draft), BIDS, 1985, p 2. The figures for 1977 and 1978 are compiled from F. T. Jannuzi and J. T, Peach, *Agrarian Structure of Bangladesh . An Impediment to Development*. West View Press, 1980 , for 1979, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics *Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh 1982*.

Table IX

Extent of Inequalities in Land Distribution in Bangladesh in the 1960s and 1970s

(Share of fractile groups and gini-ratios)

Fractile groups	1960	1968	1974	1977	1978
Bottom 60 per cent	25	24	19	11	9
Middle 30 per cent	39	40	40	40	39
Top 10 per cent	39	36	38	50	52
Gini ratio of landholding					
(a) Operational	0.49	0.48	0.58	—	—
(b) Ownership	—	—	0.59	0.63	0.66

Source : S.R. Osmani and Atiq Rahman, 'A Study on Income Distribution in Bangladesh', (mimeo), BIDS, 1981, p. 24, Table 9.

Note : The figures for the shares in 1960 and 1968 refer to operational holdings, where as those of 1977 and 1978 refer to ownership. Operational holdings include rented in land from others. Since the tenants have no permanent right over the rented in land and can be evicted at will (despite Government rules guaranteeing their rights) operational holdings do not represent the true picture of control over land. In that sense the two data are not strictly comparable. In any case, one may still get a trend of concentaation from the above table.

support to the above conclusion. In 1977 a national level survey on land occupancy in Bangladesh was carried out by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and the USAID. This was followed by two more surveys, in 1978 and 1979. These are known as Land Occupancy Surveys. That there has been a high concentration of landownership at the macro level may be observed from table VIII. According to the 1978 survey the bottom 75 per cent of the households owned only about a fifth of the total land, while the top 8.5 per cent, who owned land in sizes of more than five acres, owned 48 per cent of the total land. Though not strictly comparable, these figures of 1960s when contrasted with two other macro studies conducted in 1960 and 1968 indicate that the extent of concentration has increased in the 1970s. That means a larger area of land is under the control of larger farmers while the access to land by those at the bottom, has become extremely limited (see table IX). High growth of population in a situation of acute concentration of land meant an increase in the extent of landlessness. Thus between 1960 and 1982, landless households in rural areas increased from 3.1 million to 4.8 million implying an average growth of 2 05 per annum. The growth rate of the functionally landless households however had been higher (2.19 per cent per annum) over the same period.

As table X shows the growth of landless households (3.1 per cent per annum) is much faster than the rate of growth of population (2.5 per

cent per annum).[27] As for the functionally landless, the growth rate in rural areas is less than the total growth rate. This is due to rapid rate of increase in the migration of this class to the metropolitan cities and the growth of rural cities. Still, the growth of the rural landless (2.2 per cent per annum) is much higher than that of all rural households.

If landlessness continues to grow at the rate estimated in Table X, (Hossain, 'A note on the Trend of Landlessness', 1985), the proportion of

Table X

An Estimate of the Growth of Landlessness

ITEMS	1960	1970	1982	Annual rate of growth (%)
1. Population				
Total (million)	53.9	81.9	92.0	2.46
Rural (million)	51.4	72.3	77.2	1.87
2. Number of households (000)				
Total	9,603	13,690	15,072	2.07
Rural	9,132	12,163	12,892	1.58
3. Number of farm households (000)	6,139	7,109	8,124	1.28
4. Pure tenant, households (000)	61	21	n.a.	—
5. Landless households operating no land (000)	803	1,194	1,342	2.36
Total	3,525	6,602	6,948	3,13
Rural	3,054	5,075	4,768	2.05
6. Households functionally landless				
Total	4,267	7,775	8,290	3.06
Rural	3,796	6,245	6,110	2.19

Note : Functionally landless is defined as those who own less than 3.5 acres of land.

Source : M. Hossain, 1985, *Ibid*, Table 3 ; compiled from Population and Agricultural Censuses of Bangladesh.

landless households would increase to about 50 per cent and that of the functionally landless to about 59 per cent of total households in the country. Most rural researchers would, of course, consider even this projection as 'conservative'. To summarize, the concentration of land in a few hands and dispossession of the many has been accentuated overtime and the pace

has accelerated in recent years. Both micro and macro studies confirm this conclusion. However, it must be recognised that all lands are not of same value. After all, an acre of ordinary dry land producing a local variety of paddy is not of the same value as an acre of wet land producing three HYV crops. So it has been rightly suggested by Rudra[28] that the degree of concentration should be measured in terms of value of land possessed rather than that of the surface area of land owned. The value of land depends on a number of factors, like the type of soil, access to irrigation facilities, productivity etc. These are, some of the factors considered in the next section.

Ownership of Other Material Elements of Production

Land, though the most important of all the means of production, cannot alone determine the material aspects of production in a Bangladesh village. It has to be complemented with other material elements, such as animals, especially draught animals, farming implements and inputs of production including capital and other assets.

Distribution of draught animals

Our findings on the distribution of draught animals also reveal a diverse and unequal picture.

(i) The botom 60 per cent of households in village-1 owned one quarter of the total draught animals in 1972 and they owned on average 0.76 draught animals per household. Their share dropped to 15.80 per cent in 1981. The per household figure, too, dropped to 0.66. A similar trend was also observed in Village-2. The bottom 60 per cent of households in village-2 owned 25.07 per cent of draught animals in 1972 and the proportion dropped to 24.33 per cent in 1981. The per household figures dropped from 1.07 in 1972 to 0.76 in 1981.

(ii) By contrast, the top 10 per cent of housholds improved their position during the 1970s. While they owned 31.31 per cent in 1972 in village-1, the proportion increased to 36.74 per cent in 1981. Though the per household figure for the top 10 per cent of households declined in 1981 it still was at least six times higher than that of the bottom 60 per cent of households. In village-2, the top 10 per cent of households owned 30.05 per cent of draught animals (6.30 per household) in 1972 and 34.31 per cent (3.76 per household) in 1981.

Like Lenin, using the ownership of draught animals as a basic differentiating variable, we made a comparative analysis of the economic strength of the rural households. We found that :

(i) In village-1, the well-to-do peasantry, constituting only 12 per cent of households (and 17.81 per cent of total population in the village), held 40.32 per cent of total area under crops in

1981. This group also owned a considerable proportion of total draught animals (43.34 per cent) and total owned cultivable land (41.58 per cent). At the opposite pole, we found the complete dispossession of the bottom group. The poor peasantry, comprising a little more than half of the total households (54 per cent) had only about one-sixth (17.80 per cent) of the total area under crops. This group owned only one-fifth (20.20 per cent) of the total owned cultivable land and only 3.80 per cent of total draught animals.

(ii) The differences were more marked in village-2. The rich peasantry, comprising about 16.31 per cent of the total population, owned little less than half of total land under crops and also total owned cultivable land (42.74 per cent and 45.70 per cent respectively). They also held about one third of the total draught animals. But, at the other end, the poor peasantry, comprising more than half (53.23 per cent) of total households and 40.71 per cent of total population controlled only one-eleventh (9.20 per cent) of total land under crops and owned about one-ninth (10.59 per cent) of the total cultivable land. Their share in the ownership of total draught animals was negligible, at only 2.83 per cent. Distribution of other animals including milch cows, calves, goats etc. also differed significantly.

Farming implements and accessories

Distribution of common farming implements like ploughs, levellers, spades, sickles, axes, choppers, water scoops, harrows, and slings was not only unequal, the quality also varied between rich and the poor peasants. Thus, the well-to-do peasantry in both villages were far better supplied with these implements than their poorer counterparts. Also, the richer peasants' ploughs were well built and maintained. They had the means to change accessories of ploughs like iron share (locally known as *fala*) or wooden platform (*dophar*) in time and as a result were in an advantageous position. The poorer farmers continued to plough with dwarfed *falas* and *dophars*. So the quality of ploughing varied widely.

Not only that, the well-to-do peasantry were seen to do their sowing faster and more intensively, they made better use of favourable weather, sowed the seed in more humid and well poughed soil, weeded and watered crop plants in time and in right proportions, and reaped the harvest and thrashed the grain at the proper time. Over and above this, they owned most of the irrigation pumps, took advantage of their socio-economic status to obtain susidised modern inputs like fe...lizers, seeds, pesticides, institutional credit etc. As a result they were t' real beneficiaries of the modern input package.

All these again had differential impacts on cropping intensities and

the level of production. Where the penetration of modern inputs has been more significant (like our village-1), the inverse relationship between farm size and 'productivity' is breaking down and bigger farms are doing better in terms of per acre output.

Not only did the richer households share the major part of total production, but they also took advantage of their better staying power and sold their produce when the price was higher. Poorer peasants, most of them in perpetual debt and in need of cash, sold off their produce immediately after the harvest at a cheaper price.

Differences in the Standard of Living

Concomitant with the unequal distribution of material elements of production, we observed an equally depressing picture in the standard of living of different groups of the peasantry. We looked into the ownership pattern of houses, other assets like radios, torches, cycles, motorcycles etc. and the pattern of expenditure with a special emphasis on the quantity and quality of their food intake. We observed a clear differentiation in conditions between the top and bottom groups, both in terms of the number and the nature of these elements.

The nature and distribution of expenditure also reflected the differential standard of living. In village-1, the bottom two groups (constituting 41 per cent of households) shared only 17.44 per cent of total expenditure. But the top two groups (7.5 per cent of households) accounted for almost *one-third the total expenditure.* Again, a big percentage of expenditure on food (which is generally taken as an evidence of a low standard) was noticed amongst poorer groups. But the richer groups had smaller percentage of their expenditure earmarked for food so that they could concentrate on other necessities and luxuries of living. Also expenditure on non-productive heads like gifts, festivals, litigation, increased proportionately from poorer to richer groups.

However, the pattern of food intake was highly assymetrical. The level and quality of food consumption differed sharply and most households in the poorer groups experienced a near famine situation almost every year. On the contrary, we could easily locate the well-fed, fair-looking rich peasantry with enough characteristics to reflect their more assured and contended living.

In other words, we noticed that a distinct process of differentiation of the rural households into propertied and propertyless, into better-off and worse-off, had set in our study villages.

Factors Working Behind Differentiation

The social relations of production, especially the emerging ones, primarily account for the acute level of differences in the material elements of production. In particular, the Green Revolution has been playing an important role in differentiating the peasantry. Although the new tech-

nology has been described by some as 'scale neutral', it has been strongly argued by many that the benefits of the Green Revolution were being monopolized by rich and the middle farmers to the relative exclusion of the small peasantry.[29] Byres postulated back in the early 1970s that the new technology required huge working capital and only the rich peasantry with 'larger personal resources and/or access to credit on reasonable terms' were capable of taking advantage of such a technology. 'Small peasants and sharecroppers . . . are thereby excluded, because of their lack of resources and lack of acceptable collateral.'[30]

Byres' apprehensions have proven to be true for most countries, including Bangladesh. A number of studies on Bangladesh have concluded that due to better access to capital and input markets, the rich farmers adopted the new technology more frequently than the smaller ones and the proportion of their land under HYVs was greater.[31] As a result, the richer peasantry have been able to command greater surplus generated in the rural economy in cumulative terms, thus pushing the less fortunate ones to the ranks of the impoverished peasanty.

There has also been a shift in the nature of tenancy from share tenancy to fixed-rent tenancy. Share tenancy, has been shrinking and turning into a commercial venture, especially, in the relatively advanced areas where modern agricultural inputs have made some inroads.

Though poor peasants still overcrowd the share/tenancy markets, some of them are leaving to become wage labourers and some rich peasants are taking in rented land. Rich peasants are also resuming part of their land rented out to cultivate it under their own supervision with the help of wage labourers. It was seen in our study of village-1 (relatively advanced one) that while the proportion of households owning more than 7.50 acres of land declined from 8.10 per cent to 7.50 per cent between 1972 to 1981, their command over operated land actually increased from 29 per cent to 38 percent. Village-2 too experienced similar changes in the command land, though not of the same degree as that in village-1. In contrast, households owning less than 2.50 acres of land actually lost some control over the operated land in both the villages, though of not same magnitude. The consequences of this changed circumstance have been reflected in table XI, which tells that the proportion of tenant-owners has actually fallen over the last three decades or so.

The terms of share-cropping have also deteriorated over the last decade. Tenants coming from the poorer land groups are the victims of harsher terms. They are also obliged to give extra services to the land-owners and remain loyal to them. Small peasants' land has been gradually expropriated by the rich peasants through mortgage arrangements and credit relations.

The extent of commoditization of all items, including land, has expanded over the last decade. The growing influence of market forces and increased market participation by all groups of the peasantry have

Table IX

Tenancy Relations in Transition : 1951-1981

Categories of farms	Advanced area (Percentage of farm) (Village-1)			Less Advanced Area (Percentage of farm) (Village-2)		
	1951	1972	1981	1951	1972	1981
Rentier-owner	28.45	24.15	24.69	32.84	21.45	10.31
Pure-owner	24.40	33.92	35.44	34.00	31.42	57.43
Tenant-owner	47.15	40.00	33.54	30.04	45.71	24.74
Pure-tenants	0	1.93	6.33	2.12	1.42	7 22

Source : Field Survey by the Author.

accentuated the processes of differentiation. The rich peasants who are better endowed with resources and staying power are the beneficiaries of these processes. Landsellers are mostly the poor and lower middle peasants and buyers are the rich peasants. Land prices have gone up dramatically. Poor peasants, always in debt and with a greater need of cash for buying food and other necessities, sell land whenever in crisis and thus end up landless.

The extent of commoditization has been further accentuated by the number of hired labourers who not only sell their labour power but also buy all their necessities from the market. We have already indicated the significant rise in the proportion of Agricultural Labourer Households (ALH), particularly in our study of village-1. (See also Khan, 1979 : 417). That landlessness was growing faster, swelling the ranks of the rural proletariat (or for that matter 'partial' proletariat) was also confirmed by the rapid growth in the number of 'worker novices'. Another indirect measure of growing proletarianisation was the extent of dispossession *manifested through* actions like (i) rich peasants resuming their leased out land ; (ii) rich peasants themselves becoming tenants at the expense of poor peasants ; and (iii) rich peasants buying more land through distress sales. We used these criteria and got support for our assertions. We also noticed some trends through which one can claim that the nature of captivity of labour was being cased with the growth of productive forces and there was a clear indication of 'purification' of wage payment—i.e. from kind to cash payment.

We also observed a higher level of class consciousness amongst agricultural wage labourers and initiation of the processes of disintegration of traditional dependency relations (though at a very low level). The nature of proletarianization was indeed 'partial'. And one should not underestimate the dependent relationship arising out of the land tenure system, lack

of employment opportunities, the age-old community ideologies, kinship etc. was still very active.

Summary and Conclusion

Clearly a pattern of differentiation between owners and non-owners of material elements of production, including land, has emerged in rural Bangladesh. The concentration of land in a few hands and greater access of the rich peasantry to the state-sponsored modern inputs have been primarily responsible for this pace of differentiation.[32]

The speed of this differentiation is higher in a relatively advanced village which has acquired some 'Green Revolution' of technology. The old relations of production and exchange are indeed crumbling along with the pace of differentiation and a process of dispossession of the poor and enlargement of the rich holdings are gaining momentum. However, this 'proletarianization' is, as yet, partial.

The implications of the above conclusions are indeed far-reaching especially in the face of a number of studies on Bangladesh agriculture emphasizing 'quasi stable equilibrium' of Bangladesh society,[33] 'peasantization' rather than 'depeasantization',[34] "persistence" of small peasantry',[35] 'cyclical mobility',[36] 'low classness'[37] leading to the strong faith in the process of stabilization of the peasantry.

This implicit support to Shanin's *mobility schema*[38] in direct opposition to the theory of the development of a class bound peasantry in the context of Bangladesh takes us back to the debate on the differentiation of peasantry referred to earlier. This is a debate which persists in the growing literature on agrarian change in developing societies. In order to assess the validity of the differing positions in that debate, it is imperative to undertake a carefully prepared analysis of the particular forms, extent and progress of the differentiation of the peasantry in the context of the *agrarian question* which still looms large in such societies. The present paper is, in a way, a modest attempt to raise these pertinent issues, if not face them squarely.

1 T.J. Byres, 'Agrarian Transition and the Agrarian Question', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol, 4, No. 3, April, 1977, p. 258.

2 By differentiation of the peasantry we take it to mean essentially the process which has set in with increasing commercialization in agrarian societies whereby rural producers are set apart into distinct classes. Though these classes may not always conform to the exact specifications given in the classical statement of Lenin in his famous *Development of Capitalism in Russia* (DCR), they may have to be understood in terms of their relationships with the diverse

processes of development of capitalism in agriculture. Lenin abstracts i beautifully by a single word 'depeasantization'.

The concept, however, becomes clearer if one can concentrate on the word *differentiation* itself, which denotes the processes of becoming separate, distinct, the acquisition of specialized forms out of generalized or homogeneous ones; and that which results from such a process. (See. J. Gould and L, Kolb, *A Dictionary of Social Science*, Tavistock Publication, London, 1964, p. 198-199).

3. See Engels, F, 1970, 'The Peasant Question in France and Germany' in *Selected Works of Karl Marx* and *Fredric Engels*, Vol. 3, Moscow : Progress Publishers, written in 1894 and first published 1894-5.
4. See Kautsky, 1899, Die Agrarfrage and Lenin, *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, 1977. Progress Publishers (fifth print).
5. For a fuller treatment of this debate and its application in the context of Bangladesh see Atiur Rahman's forthcoming (1986) book, *Peasants and Classes*, University Press Ltd. Dhaka/Oxford University Press Delhi/Zed Books, London.
6. Government of Bengal, *Report of the Land Revenue Commission* (Sir Francis Floud, Chairman), Vol. II, Bengal Government Press, Alipore, 1940; Appendix IX, VIII(b).
7. COB, 1940, *ibid*, Table VIII(c).
8. F.O. Bell, *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the District of Dinajpur 1934-40* Government of Bengal, Bengal Government Press, Alipore, 1942.
9. Bell, *ibid*, p. 80.
10. HSM Ishaque, *Agricultural Statistics by Plot to Plot Enumeration in Bengal, 1944-45, Part-I*, Government of Bengal, Bengal Government Press, Alipo 1946.
11. A Abdullah, 'Land Reform and Agrarian Change in Bangladesh', 1 *Bangladesh Development Studies*, Vol. IV, No. 1, January 1976.
12. M. Hossain, 'Land Reform and Agrarian Change in Bangladesh', (mimeo Institute of Development Economics, Tokyo, 1981.
13. As quoted in R.K Mukherjee, *The Dynamics of a Rural Society*, A Kaden Verlag, Berlin, 1957 ; footnote 1, p. 47.
14. R.K. Mukherjee, *ibid*, p. 12.
15. Mukherjee, *ibid*, p. 13.
16. Mukherjee, *ibid*, p. 14-40.
17. Mukherjee, *ibid*, p. 50.
18. Abdullah, 'Land Reform', 1976, p. 79-80.
19. GOB, *Report of the Land Revenue Commission* (Floud Commission Report 1940, p. 41-46.
20. The Act of 1950 had the following provisions : See KBM Mahmud, *Report of the Land Revenue Commission*, East Pakistan, East Pakistan Government Pres 1959, p. 3-4.
    i) All rent-receiving interests in all lands stood acquired ; actual tillers of th land became direct tenants under the government. All *rayats* (to be calle '*maliks*' henceforth) were to have permanent, heritable and transferabl rights to use their land in any way they liked.
    ii) Subletting of land was forbidden in future. However, cultivation und barga (sharecropping) system was not to be treated as subletting.

iii) All cultivable lands in excess of 100 bighas (33.3 acres) per family or 10 bighas per family member, whichever was larger, plus homestead land upto a maximum of 10 bighas, were to be acquired by the Government. This ceiling would be relaxable in cases of tea, cafel, sugarcane and rubber plantations, carsia leaves, gardens, orchards and large scale appliances and large scale dairy farming. The excess land thus acquired would be settled with *bonafide* cultivators holding less than 3 acres of land

iv) For acquisition of rent-receiving interests, compensation was payable on a graduated scale ranging from 10 times the net annual income in case of persons with net income of Taka 500 or less every year to 2 times the net annual income in case of persons with net income of Taka 1 lakh (one hundred thousand) or more.

v) For acquisition of "khas" lands, compensation was payable at the rate of 5 times the net annual profit from the land.

vi) Maximum rent would not exceed one-tenth of the annual gross produce of the land. Fixed kind-rent, irrespective of production, was to be abolished. In effect, it meant that kind rent was not to exceed 50 per cent of the produce.

vii) No holding could be sub-divided to the extent that the rent of any portion would be less than Rupee 1.

viii) Transfer of land would be restricted to only *bonafide* cultivators.

Certain amendments were made to these from time to time. The following are a few of them. (See Abdullah, 'Land Reform', 1976, p 81-82).

(1) The amount of retainable *khas* land was raised from 100 to 375 *bighas* by the East Pakistan Ordinance No. XV of 1961. Some land has to be restored then to previous owners.

(2) In 1964, the exemption of the ceiling (none 375 *bighas*) was extended to co-operative societies, "provided the ownership of the land is transferred unconditionally to the society by the individual members". (L. Kabir, *The Rights and Liabilities of the Raiyats under the Bengal Tenancy Act 1885 and the State Acquisition and Tenancy Act, 1950 (with Amendments)*, Law House Publications, Dhaka, 1972.

The Act had two broad objectives Firstly, the elimination of rent-receiving interests previously enjoyed by intermediaries and illegal exactions and secondly, the re-distribution of excess land. Although the Act was expected to have great impact on the traditional agrarian structure, yet it failed to bring about any significant change. Specifically, the way in which the land used to be owned and operated remained the same after the enactment of the Act. The following can be noted :

(i) Illegal exactions were not reduced and tenants were not much more secure than hey were under the old system. (See Abdullah, 1976, *op cit*, p. 86). Moreover the lower level government functionaries (e.g. the *tahsildars*) were not ess oppressive than the *naibs* and *gomastas* of the old Zamindars. Except for a slight ncrease in the rent collection of the government, the impact of the Act of 1950 was nsignificant. The intermediaries between the state and the cultivators were not ffectively removed, but were merely substituted by another category which had governent backing.

(ii) The redistributive effect was not very significant either. The ceiling was too igh relative to the average size of holding. In fact, according to one source, there were nly 529 families with more than 375 *bighas* (see M. Hossain, Report of the Land evenue Administration Enquiry Committee, 1962-63, Government of East Pakistan, levenue Department, Dhaka, 1963, p. 62).

According to another source, the number was 439 and the total amount of exc *Khas* land acquired was only 164 thousand acres (Abdullah, 1976, *op. cit.*, p. 83). T was less than 1 per cent of the net cropped area of 1947/48.

If the acquired land had been redistributed among all the landless labourers, tl would have received on average only 0.06 acres per head, or .03 acres per landless fami

The implementation procedures were inefficient. There was strong pressure fr the rural rich to maintain the status quo. Moreover, there was active collaborati between the rural rich and the administration. They were powerful enough to subv any attempt to reorganize the agrarian structure (see K. Siddiqui, 'The Polit Economy of Land Reforms in Bangladesh', in C. Enayatullah (ed), *Land Reforms—So Experiences*, APDAC, Kualalumpur, 1980.)

On the whole, the Act of 1950 did not in any way help to lessen agrarian inequalit the power and wealth of the rural rich increased while there was hardly any improveme in the condition of the poor peasants

21. T.J. Byres, 'The Dialectics of India's Green Revolution', in *South Asian Revie* Vol. 5, No. 2, 1972 ; see also, Byres, 'The New Technology Class Formation *JPS*, Vol 8, No. 4, July 1981.
    K Griffin, *The Political Economy of Agrarian Change*, Macmillan, 1974.
22. In a way the distribution of land was less skewed in the early 1950s than in th 1940s. Mukherjee noted that 14 per cent of households in the interior villag less than one acre, 45 per cent between 1 and 5 acres, 20 per cent between 5 an owned 10 acres and 21 per cent owned more than 10 acres in 1942 (Mukherjee *Six Villages*, 1957, p. 84). It mav be mentioned that according to our own find ings the proportion of households, owning more than 10 acres of land wa 17.65 per cent.
23. M. Hossain, 'Land Tenure and Agricultural Development', 1981, p. 24.
24. This adjustment is made as follows :
    Effective Land size = Net Operated Land
    = Owned Cultivated Land
    + 1/2 (sharecropped in—sharecropped out) land
    + (Land leased-in under Fixed Rent-Land Leased—out under Fixed Rent).
25. G.D. Wood, 'The class Differentiation in Bangladesh', (mimeo), ADC, Dhaka, 1978, p. 5.
26. Mukherjee, *Six Villages*, 1957.
27. A recent study by Abdullah and Murshid reconfirms this trend (see Abdullah, A and Murshid, KAS, 1986, 'Interdistrict Changes and Variation in Landless ness in Bangladesh' (draft mimeo), BIDS, 1986.
28. A. Rudra, 'Class Relations in Landless Agriculture-I, *EPW* Vol. XIII, No. 22, June 3, 1978, p. 920.
29. Byres, T.J. 1972, 'The Dialectics of India's Green Revolution', *South Asian Review*; Griffin, K, 1974, *The Political Economy of Agrarian Change* Macmillan, London.
30. Byres, 1972, *ibid*, p. 104.
31. Rahman, A, 1979, 'Agrarian Structure and Capital formation : a study of Bangladesh agriculture with farm level data', unpublished Ph.D. Thesis Cambridge ; Asaduzzaman, M (1979), 'Adoption of HYV rice in Bangladesh' *Bangladesh Development Studies*, Vol VII, No. 3 ; Jones, S. 1984, 'Agrarian Structure and agricultural innovation in Bangladesh ; Panimara Village, Dhaka District', in Bayliss-Smith and Wanmali (eds) *Understanding Green Revolution*

Cambridge University Press Ltd , Rahman Atiur, 1986, *Peasants and Classes, op. cit.*

32. See chapter eight of my forthcoming book *Peasants and Classes, op cit.* for a slightly more indepth treatment of the state and the peasantry.
33. Van Schendel, 1981, *Peasant Mobility: The odds of life in rural Bangladesh*, Van Gorcum, Assen, p. 287.
34. Van Schendel, *ibid*, p. 287.
35. Bhaduri, A, Rahman Z R. Arn, Lisbet, 1986, 'Persistence and Polarisation : A Study in the Dynamics of Agrarian Contradiction' in *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Volume 13, No. 30, April 1986.
36. Bertocci, P J. 1972 : 'Community Structure and Social Rank in Two Villages of Bangladesh' *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, New Series, No. VI.
37. Abdullah, A (1976), 'Formulating a viable Land Policy -what do we need to know ?' *Bangladesh Development Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 4, Autumn.
38. We made an empirical attempt to see if Shanin's mobility schema was actually operating in our study villages The results, though not always conclusive, indicate that the 'today's rich were also 'yesterday's rich'. However, a section of them have fallen down the ladder. But hardly many poor peasants could be found to have gained the status of the rich peasantry (see Chapter three of my *Peasants and Classes op. cit*).

*UTSA PATNAIK**

*Identifying the Peasant Classes-In-Themselves in Rural India : A Methodological and Empirical Exercise***

Introduction

MUCH OF economic theorising is based on the proposition that the behaviour of economic agents with regard to production and consumption decisions is determined by the initial resource endowments, the constraints within which they operate and the consequent objective of economic activity. It will not be seriously disputed that the distribution of productive resources over the cultivating population in India is substantially unequal. It is all the more surprising that so much of economic theorising about the peasantry, abstracts from this fact of unequal resource endowments, in order to operate with the assumption of a more or less homogeneous 'peasantry', which is viewed as in its totality a class, however 'awkward'. The neo classical models of peasant equilibrium, heir to the Chayanovian model, seek to analyse the decision-making process of a 'typical' peasant household ; the recent extension of such models to take account of the bargaining process between a typical 'landlord' and a typical 'tenant' in terms of game theoretic structures, similarly operates with the abstraction of a homogeneous tenantry. But it is not only the neo classical models which assume that a typical 'peasant' or a typical 'tenant' can be validly talked about ; in this respect a theoretical convergence is observed between neo-classical equilibrium models and neo-Marxian models of peasant indebtedness under 'semi-feudalism'. Both approaches abstract from the reality of the emergence of class differentiation within the peasantry, which exists today as a consequence of historically given inequality of resource endowments.

The Marxist analyses* of rural class structures, on the other hand,

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**This paper is in the nature of a somewhat hasty summary of some salient results discussed at greater length in my forthcoming 'Peasant Class Differentiation' (OUP Delhi). The necessary acknowledgments to others and caveats to generalisations made in the book are dispensed with here in the interests of brevity ; however sincere thanks go to D.N. Rao and R. Talwar for their help with the statistical analysis of Section 3.

posit a hierarchy of resource endowments relative to the production capacity and consumption needs of the peasant households, at a given point of time. This generates relations of labour-hiring and land-leasing in the process of production, and determines the terms on which the different groups of producers participate in the markets for commodities, land lease, credit, or labour hire. It is not 'markets' which are 'interlinked': the interlinking is between different classes of persons involved in the production process, and the nature of this exploitative interlinking is determined by relative resource endowments, in short by the distribution of property. The social relations of labour-hire, land-lease, usurious credit relations and commercial profit extraction, appear to the neoclassical economists in the 'fantastic form' of an interlinking of 'markets', because the theoretical framework adopted precludes an appreciation of class relations and emphasises exchange to the exclusion of production.

Given a hierarchy of resource endowments generating exploitative relations, it follows that at a given point of time there will be a hierarchy of different situations with regard to satisfaction of subsistence needs and appropriation of surplus: some 'peasants' will fail to get enough to eat, other 'peasants' will break even, yet other 'peasants' will generate large enough surpluses not only to maintain higher-than-average consumption levels but also be able to invest in improving agricultural production (if it is profitable for them to do so). In short, the peasantry may be expected to be highly differentiated economically into more or less distinct classes. Since we know that investment in new 'green revolution' technology has been profitable, the existence of a class hierarchy within the peasantry implies that there will be a hierarchy of technical-organisational production method-complexes in use. At one pole we may expect on the part of capitalist producers maximising profit, very intensive cultivation methods with a high level of application of capital per unit of area (including in 'capital', wage-advances to hired labour) and high land and labour productivity; at the other pole on the part of poor peasants struggling for subsistence, we may expect extensive cultivation methods with very low application of modern inputs and machinery relative to labour input, consequently low land and labour productivity. In short, there will not be one but a range of 'production functions' attributable to a cross-sectional sample of households

It follows from the above that all attempts to estimate 'production functions' whether for individual crops or in the aggregate, by using farm economics data from a cross-sectional sample of holdings, would represent quite meaningless attempts in every situation where class differentiation exists. Similarly the question of the 'efficiency' of the typical 'tenant' compared to the typical 'owner', would represent a meaningless way of posing the question where 'tenants' run the gamut from large-scale capitalist producers to poor peasants hiring out their labour, and 'owners'

similarly run across this same gamut. The acceptance of a class-analysis automatically renders null and void the validity of any problematic which is located within the assumption of a homogeneous peasantry.

We may briefly refer to the relationship between the grouping of farm economics data by acreage levels, which is a widely prevalent practice, and the grouping of cultivating households into social classes, which we have argued, depends on the resource endowment of the household relative to its production capacity and consumption needs. By 'resource endowment', evidently, we should mean the effective resource per capita ; and it is because farm size grouping takes farm area unadjusted for irrigation, cropping pattern, or size of the family, that it is a poor indicator of even land resource endowment. For example, if the productivity of irrigated land is twice that of unirrigated land (a fairly realistic assumption), then a five acre dry farm supporting a five-member household will represent only one-fifth of the per capita endowment that is enjoyed by a two-member household with a five-acre wet holding. Yet with the conventional acreage grouping of data, both households would get lumped together into the same group because both operate holdings of the same area.

Secondly, farm-size grouping fails to take account of differential degrees of present investment of capital on similar physical areas. (This is analytically a similar point to that made above because the extent of irrigation, for example, is a function of past investment). When a process of technical change embodied in capitalist investment is taking place, as at present, this becomes a serious drawback. For, some better-off households within a given acreage-group would be in a position to invest and move to a qualitatively different range of production possibilities altogether, at the same time that other poor households in the same acreage group may be disinvesting owing to debt. By lumping together diametrically opposite types of households in the same groups, the analysis by acreage levels of data would succeed in obscuring effectively the real processes of capitalist investment and class differentiation.

We will not recapitulate here our earlier discussion on farm size versus farm scale, but refer the reader to the 1972 article in which the radically differing results of grouping farm economics data by alternative indices, were discussed.[1] The logical point being made is quite simple : agricultural production of farming households depends not only on the input of labour per unit of area but also on the investment of capital per unit of area and the associated level of technology. The potential for investment of capital in turn is a function of the extent of surplus generated per unit of area. Whether surplus is retained by the household for potential investment, or parted with, depends entirely on the specific position within the relations of production, namely the class position of the household which is a function of the per capita real resource endowment, or the property structure. The landless labourer certainly performs surplus labour, but gets only a wage which embodies necessary labour alone (and

sometimes not even that, necessitating consumption debts). The poor peasant tenant with no or little owned land certainly produces surplus product, but retains only that share of net output sufficient to meet consumption needs, and so on.

Empirical Identification of Peasant Classes

Once again, we will not recapitulate in detail here the rationale behind the formulation of the labour-exploitation index for empirical classification of households ; but refer the reader to the 1976 discussion.[3]

The labour-exploitation index seeks to 'capture' the class-status of a household, essentially by looking at the extent of use of outside labour or conversely the extent of the family working for others, relative to the extent of self-employment. It is identical, under certain simplifying assumptions with the surplus labour appropriated or parted with, relative to surplus labour in self-employment. It is defined for a given household as follows :

$$E = X/Y = \frac{(Hi - Ho) + (Lo - Li)}{F}$$

where Hi=Labour-days hired in on the operational holding of the household

Ho=Family labour days hired out to others

Li=Labour days worked on leased in land (whether by family or hired labour)

Lo=Labour days similarly worked on land leased out by household

F=Labour days worked by household workers on the operational holding.

Thus the index is formulated as a ratio, or a pure number, which can take positive or negative values depending on whether the household is a net employer of outside labour or is itself on balance working for others (as labourer or tenant). Indeed the range of values of E is from plus infinity to minus infinity, for at the two poles of the rural class structure, there will be diametrically opposite types of households for whom F will be zero or near zero : firstly, the big landlords with such a large resource endowment that they perform no manual labour themselves, but rely entirely on employing others' labour ; and the landless labourers, with zero resource endowment, hence zero self emplyment, who are entirely dependent on working for others.

Classes within the cultivating peasantry are identified by looking at the degree of working for others or of employing others' labour, relative to self-employment. For this purpose certain limits are set upon the value of the E-ratio, which are recapitulated in Appendix A. All subsequent use of class categories in this paper refer to the definitions set out in this Appendix. It goes without saying that this labour-use criterion represents

only a first-stage approximation at the empirical level, to the classification of cultivating households. Some degree of conscious reductionism of a complex concept to a simpler one, became unavoidable in the interest of obtaining a workable criterion. For, the criteria discussed in the Marxist literature are in fact multiple, though associated : namely (1) the resource endowment i.e., possession of means of production ; (2) the nature of labour use i.e., whether exploiting, whether self-employed, or whether exploited ; and (3) the production of a retained surplus above subsistence needs as compared to breaking even or a deficit situation which entails borrowing.

While we ideally need to use a vector of all three criteria, in order to apply it we would need to carry out practically every calculation which is usually made with farm economics data, at the level of every single household. With a large sample this could become a very time-consuming procedure. For this reason, the second of the three criteria was chosen and expressed in a formalised way, in order to provide a first-stage classification. Some households might well get misclassified in this first-stage attempt, in which case the additional criteria could be brought into play.

This criterion for classification was applied to a random sample[3] of 361 households (242 operating land, and 119 landless) drawn from the population of holdings of 15 acres and less in Haryana, 1972-73. The size-restriction implied that all landlord and most of the larger-scale peasant holdings were left out ; simultaneously it implied a more stringent test for our hypothesis that considerable class differentiation exists even within the cultivating peasantry proper.

We have earier argued that a given acreage-group may be expected to contain households of very diverse class character owing to the fact that unadjusted acreage does not constitute an accurate index of land endowment. Therefore, the first table of interest is the two-way table given below which shows the grouping of the 242 cultivating households by both criteria : by acreage-level, and by the value of the labour-use ratio defining classes. The figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total number.

It may be noted that any given acreage group does indeed contain holdings ranging all the way from poor peasant to rich peasant status (except the 'petty employers' who are confined to holdings below 5 acres). However, the proportion of labour-hiring holdings (rich peasants and middle peasants) in the total of holdings by acreage group, tends to rise with rising farm size. Evidently the two criteria for grouping are associated, as we would expect, but the degree of association is less than most people would believe on *a priori* grounds. The table below on the net labour days hired in or out per holding, serves to underline the great variation in the economic status of households within each acreage group.

It is clear that a given acreage group such as 10 to 15 acres, contains the entire range of class status, from the three rich peasant holdings on

Table I

Distribution of Sample Holdings by Acreage and Economic Class

Acreage	Rich peasant	Middle peasant	Small peasant	Poor peasant	Petty employer	All	
0-2.5	1 (2.1)	5 (10.6)	31 (65.9)	6 (8.5)	4 (12.8)	47	100.0
2.5-5.0	3 (3.8)	19 (24.4)	43 (55.1)	11 (14.1)	2 (2.6)	78	100.0
5.0-10.0	8 (8.2)	37 (38.1)	49 (50.5)	3 (3.1)	0 (0.0)	97	100.0
10.0-15.0	3 (15.0)	10 (50.0)	5 (25.0)	2 (10.0)	0 (0.0)	20	100.0
All	15 (6.2)	71 (29.3)	128 (52.9)	22 (9.1)	6 (2.2)	242	100.0

Note : The category 'petty employers' is a sub-set separated from the 'rich-peasants' on the ground that they are 'welfare' cases, i e., families with poor endowment who are obliged to rely on hired labour owing to the absence of members of working age in the family—basically the 'widows and orphans' group.

Table II

Net Labour-days Hired-in/Hired out plus Net labour-days Appropriated Through Leasing in/Leasing out, by farm size class status (Days per holding)

Acreage	Rich peasant	Middle peasant	Small peasant	Poor peasant	Petty employer	All
0-2.5	180.00	18.55	—7.96	—229.06	26.12	—16.72
2.5-5.0	134.50	24.30	—5.35	—147.64	121.75	—12.68
5.0.10.0	266.81	47.85	—16.23	—165.42	. .	26.51
10.0-15.0	392.17	39.12	—2.50	—180.00	...	63.04
	259.63	38.26	—10.14	—154.39	58.00	13.96

Note : Labour days appropriated through net hiring in and leasing have a plus sign while labour days of the family worked for others have a minus sign. Only nine households are affected by calculation of the rental term ; their exclusion, i.e., considering labour-hiring alone alters the figures very little.

average employing 392.17 labour days each, to two poor peasant holdings which on balance work on wages for others for an average of 180 days each. This is hardly surprising, for acreage operated is unstandardised and family size varies widely, giving rise to big variations in the per capita effective resource endowment and generating diametrically opposite patterns of labour-use.

It may be of some interest to look at the extent of association between the alternative criteria we are considering Treating Table 1 as a contingency table with (a) 12 degrees of freedom and (b) 9 degrees of freedom on excluding petty employers, we find that application of the chi-square test of association gives the result in both cases, of an observed chi-square value which is above the critical value for which the null hypothesis of no association is to be accepted at the 0.01 level of confidence. The null hypothesis therefore stands rejected. However the difference between the observed and critical chi-square values is not so large as to exclude the possibility, a priori, that Yate's correction might make a difference. Therefore the contingency table was reduced to a 2×2 one by pooling together, on the one hand, holdings below 5 acres and those above ; and, on the other hand, the rich and middle peasant holdings in one group with all other holdings in the other group. After applying Yate's correction it was found that the null hypothesis continues to be rejected at the 0.01 level. The coefficient of contingency (proposed by Karl Pearson) works out to $C=0.37$ with the 9 d.f. table and reduces slightly to $C=0.35$ with the 1 d.f. table. Thus the association between the two methods of grouping is moderate.

In section 4 we have summarised the results of classifying data relating to assets value, input costs, output performance, crop disposal and surplus generation, by both criteria. The main purpose of the exercise was to demonstrate that a great deal of difference is made to our perception of the stylised facts relating to agriculture, by the method of aggregation used. The questions of (a) 'efficiency' of peasant producers versus capitalist producers ; (b) who invests in green revolution technology—'everybody' or a minority of specific class status ; (c) whether 'semi-feudal' exploitation implies enforced commercialisation—all these questions will have very different, in some cases diametrically opposite answers depending on whether we aggregate according to a direct index such as the labour-use index, or use inadequate surrogates such as acreage.

To anticipate, we find that it is the labour-hiring holdings which show the largest relative use of modern equipment (pumpsets, thresher, powered chaffcutter, tractor etc.,) and higher application per acre of modern purchased inputs, while the small peasant and poor peasant holdings have little modern equipment and lower than average per acre application of inputs. The output per acre is consequently higher on labour hiring holdings which generate surpluses above minimum consump-

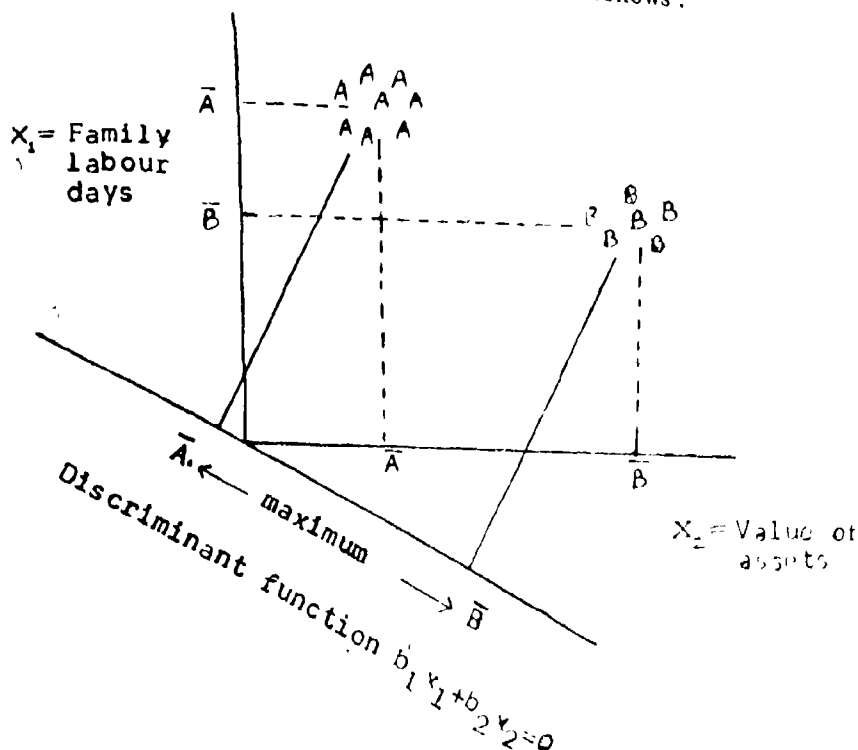
tion, while the small and poor peasants register deficits. This clearly indicates that the direction of further differentiation under a regime of production for markets will be such as to give an overwhelming advantage to the labour-hiring holdings relative to the family labour-based ones as Marxist theorising would predict. The relative income position of the exploited classes is bound to worsen given their deficit status and enforced indebtedness.

The very same data aggregated by acreage levels fail to bring out the reality of the class concentration of green revolution technology and hence of incomes, owing to the bringing together within each acreage group of economically diverse holdings.

A test of the validity of the classification

From the point of view of the statistician, what we have proposed is a method of aggregating farm economics data, which we claim is more meaningful in bringing out the real class groupings which exist in rural society, as compared to the conventional grouping methods such as acreage. For us the validity of our method derives from the validity of the theory underlying the method, and statistical testing is in the nature of a check only. For the statistician unencumbered by adherence to any theoretical 'isms', the validity of any particular aggregation method depends on whether the characteristics of the classes defined by that method, display significant difference in their mean class values, such that the classes treated as samples, can be inferred to have been drawn from different populations. Any test of significance of mean value differences over classes, must basically consider the within-class variance relative to the between-class variance. Clearly if the within-class variance for characteristics is large relative to between-class variance, the method of classification is faulty. For example, it is clear from mere inspection of Table II without any need for tests, that as far as the characteristic of labour-use is concerned, the acreage method of grouping is quite hopeless, for the within-group variation in labour use (each row) is actually larger than the between-group variation (each column).

To show that the labour-exploitation criterion provides a statistically valid method of aggregation, we will apply Fisher's discriminant function analysis. This was developed as a powerful tool of linear statistical inference, relevant for all theories of clustering or grouping of variable values, and with a wide range of applications from cluster analysis in biometry to sociological 'stratification' exercises. Discriminant function analysis permits us to take multiple characteristics, say p in number, and treating the neo classes into which the observations are grouped as so many samples, to test for the significance of the difference in sample means of all p characteristics considered simultaneously. The discriminant function is defined as that linear function whose coefficients are such that the

separation of the classes is maximised. For example, in the case of two characteristics—say value of assests, and family labour days used in production—and the separation of observations into two groups, the discriminant function can be graphically represented as follows :

Note : Adopted from RH Green, *Sampling design and statistical methods for environment biologists* (1979) The discriminant function is a new axis which maximises the separation of the groups. The possible number of functions is one less than the number of groups or number of characteristics, whichever is smaller.

What are the characteristics we might take, for testing the statistical validity of grouping by the labour-use criterion ? The salient respect in which the labour-exploitation index may be expected to give more meaningful results, as we have argued, is in regard to bringing out the structure of capital investment. When a process of 'green revolution' or capitalist investment is taking place as in Haryana since the sixties, we would expect that the classes appropriating surplus labour would owing to their consequent command over investible surplus, be in a better position to invest in new technology. The use of modern machinery such as powered chaff-cutters, tillers, pumpsets, threshers and tractors as well as the application per unit of area of fertilizers, pesticides, and high-yielding seed may be expected to be higher than average on these holdings while conversely the value of modern assests and new inputs per unit of area may be expected

to show lower-than-average values for the poor peasants and small peasants. (The fact that technical change in India has necessarily occurred in a land-augmenting fashion implies that larger fixed capital investment is associated with larger labour-input and there is no contradiction in postulating more use of machinery by holdings employing more hired labour). The market-orientation of the labour-hiring holdings may also be expected to be higher, for they represent the developing capitalist tendency.

Bearing in mind this theoretical background, we have adopted the following three characteristics :

(1) Value of modern powered equipment and assets per unit of area operated, K/A
(2) Value of combined output (crop plus livestock products) per unit of area operated, X/A
(3) Value of market sales as proportion to total output value, M/X.

It will not be seriously disputed that high capital investment, high land productivity and high market orientation taken together are important indicators of the capitalist character of production. By taking up these particular attributes for statistical testing of the distance between the classes, we are simultaneously seeking to establish that the labour-hiring holdings do represent the capitalist tendency within the peasantry.

Once the discriminant functions have been estimated, Mahalanobis distance D_p^2 over p characteristics may be easily calculated and the F-test applied to the associated variance ratio.[4] (While Mahalanobis distance has been widely used in sociological studies in India, the idea of extending the statistical analysis to discriminant functions, I owe to the work of E. Araquem da Silva, 1984, who has carried out some interesting tests on farm data from N.E. Brazil classified according to the labour-exploitation criterion as developed in my 1976 article).[5]

The results of pairwise discriminant analysis for the four classes (rich, middle, small and poor peasants) are given in Table III. The fifth group, the petty employers have been excluded since their number is small and they represent a special 'widows and orphans' category. (For all purposes of class comparisons in the detailed study, they are included among the 'rural poor' comprising the small peasants, poor peasants, and landless labourers). Thus, households comprising 236 out of the 242 cultivating households are considered in the discriminant analysis.

The value of Mahalanobis distance D_p^2 was worked out in every case along with the associated variance ratio

$$F = \frac{N_1+N_2-P-1}{P} \cdot \frac{N_1 N_2}{(N_1+N_2)(N_1+N_2-2)} D_p^2$$

where N_1, N_2 are the numbers of holdings in the two classes and P the number of characteristics, in this case 3. The F-test was applied to the observed F value. We are thus testing for the null hypothesis that there is

no difference in class means which would imply that the classes are drawn from the same population.

It will be noted from the Table III that in every single pairwise comparison of classes, the observed F value is very far above the critical F value at even the stringent 0.001 level (as opposed to the usual 0.01 level generally adopted). Thus in the case of rich peasant class and middle peasant class, the distance statistic value is such that observed F is 2378.7 while critical F is 6.17 ; and similarly in the case of every comparison. (If we had the relevant tables of F-value then, we could posit even more significant results than at the 0.001 level given the large difference in observed and critical F values).

These results enable us to reject decisively the null hypothesis and to say that the classes are drawn from different populations. In fact, we could not possibly expect to obtain stronger statistical results than we have here. The test indicates that the labour-exploitation criterion is a robust criterion for classification since it enables us to group households into classes which are significantly distant from each other with respect to some important indicators of capitalist production.

Of course, the criterion may be expected to prove itself to be less robust in a different socio-economic structure in which the tendency towards capitalist differentiation may be weak and labour use be weakly associated with class status. If caste factors remain very important so that for example in a Thanjavur village large numbers of very impoverished Brahmins refuse to touch the plough but hire outside labour, our criterion will not work well. In Green Revolution areas however the criterion may be expected to provide a far more accurate method of capturing the real processes of change arising from capitalist investment. This is what is indicated by the test on Mahalanobis distance using Haryana data for households classified by the criterion.

Indicators of developing capitalist production relations in Haryana

In this section we give selectively some results of an extensive exercise in grouping farm economics data for the cultivating households in the sample by the alternative criteria of acreage-level, and class-status. These results shed some light on a range of problems earlier mentioned namely (a) whether investment in 'green revolution' technology is being under-taken by 'everybody' or is in fact concentrated with particular classes; (b) the 'efficiency' of family-labour based cultivation as opposed to hired-labour based cultivation; (c) whether 'semi-feudalism' implies enforced market-orientation of poor peasants and (d) who are the rural poor, and who the appropriators of surplus. Some of these results are anticipated in the statistical exercise of the previous section.

Table III

Pairwise discrimininant analysis for classes at 0.1 per cent level.

Variables P_1	Mean Values Class 2	Mean Values Class 1	Characteristic Vector	Mean Values Class 3	Mean Values Class 2	Characteristic Vector
P_1 X/A	678.718	864.327	—0.4094	573.592	678.718	−0.0143
P_2 :K/A	1446.408	2671.360	0.3786	1432.030	1446.408	−0.0035
P_3 M/X	32.314	43.537	18.0351	22.095	32.314	−0.0408
N	71	15		128	71	
D^2_3	590.22	F (3,82) = 2378.37* F (3,60) = 6.17		12.20	F (3,195) = 183.80* F (3,120) = 5.79	

Variables P_1	Mean Values Class 4	Mean Values Class 3	Charectristic Vector	Mean Values Class 3	Mean Values Class 1	Characteristic Vector
P_1 : X/A	501.336	573.592	—0.4268	573.592	864.327	—0.0126
P_2 : K/A	809.380	1432.030	0.2292	1432.030	2671.360	0.0574
P_3 : M/X	9.374	22.095	17.5163	22.095	43.537	7.0725
N	22	128		128	15	
D^2_3	334.73	F (3,146) = 2066.38* F (3,120) =5.79		219.21	F (3,139) = 967.14* F (3,120) = 5.79	

Variables P_1	Mean Values		Characteristic Vector	Mean Values		Characteristic Vector
	Class	Class		Class 4	Class 1	
P_1 : X/A	501.336	678.718	−0.014	501.336	864.327	0.0100
P_2 : K/A	809.380	1446.408	—0.015	809.380	2671.360	0 0022
P_3 : M/X	9.374	32.314	1.120	9.374	43.537	0.9461
N	22	71		22	15	
D^r D^2_3	32.98	F (3,89) = 180.11* F (3,60) = 6.17		40.09	F (3.33) = 112.36* F (3.30) = 7.05	

Note : Class 1=Rich peasant, Class 2=Middle peasant,
Class 3=Small peasant, Class 4=Poor peasant.
Mahalanobis distance D^2_p value is underlined.
All critical F values (last row each set) are at 0.001 level.

Asset-structure and adoption of 'green revolution' technology

As three possible indicators of green revolution technology, we look in Table IV, at the percentage of operated area (i) under irrigation, (ii) under high-yielding verieties and (iii) under remunerative crops, (which include all high-value crops requiring irrigation), by both grouping methods. It is clear that all three indicators show a positive association with class status, but no clear association with farm size emerges.

Thus higher-than-average share of area under irrigation, under HYV, and under profitable crops is registered by the rich peasants and middle peasants (together constituting the net labour hiring and net rent appropriating classes) while the small peasants and poor peasants show lower than average or near average values.

The value and structure of fixed capital assets used in production, show a very clear class-wise variation. The rich peasants own on average about four times the value of assets owned by poor peasants. But similar variation is also present by the acreage-grouping; what is more interesting is the structure of assets. We would expect the labour-hiring classes, insofar as they represent the capitalist tendency within the peasantry, to have invested in the past to a larger extent in the typical land-augmenting methods of the new green revolution technology, in pumpsets and tubewells for irrigation, perhaps sprinkler systems, in powered chaff cutters, in pesticide sprayers, in threshers and perhaps even tractors. (In the event, only one rich peasant holding in the sample possessed a tractor—which is not surprising given the low acreage restriction on the sample; but other equipment had been invested in to some extent) Conversely we would expect the family labour-based and hiring-out households (small peasants and poor peasants) to possess relatively more of the traditional equipment.

Our expectations are substantially borne out by the class-wise picture of asset ownership given in Table V. The share of tractors, tubewells and pumpsets plus other modern powered equipment made up as high as 49 7 per cent of total non-land productive assets in the case of rich peasants, 25 per cent for middle peasants, while for small and poor peasants it drops to 20 per cent and zero per cent. Conversely, livestock account for 91 per cent and 67.6 per cent of the total assets value for poor and small peasants compared to 56.5 and 39.4 per cent for middle and rich peasants. The latter have evidently substituted bullock labour for tillage and traction by machinery to a greater extent and have moved thereby to a different set of production possibilities altogether.

The structure of current inputs cost, i e. the working capital structure, naturally reflects the differing asset structure across classes. Livestock maintenance, traditionally the most important item of current costs, accounts for only 31 per cent of total costs incurred by rich peasants, 54.4 per cent for middle peasants and as high as 73.7 per cent and 67.8 per cent

small and poor peasants respectively. Conversely the costs incurred typically capitalist type cultivation, namely wage outlays plus fuel for ıchinery, irrigation charges and machinery maintenence plus hire of uipment and livestock, add up to 45.4 per cent of total costs in the case rich peasants, drop substantially to 22.8 per cent for middle peasants d are very small at 6.9 per cent and 6.7 per cent respectively, for small d poor peasants. Thus, 'green revolution' technology is not operated all holdings, but shows a marked concentration with the labour-hiring dings, as theoretically predicted. The above analysis lends support to view earlier stated, that there exists a hierarchy of techniques and hods of production corresponding to the class hierarchy. It is not ely that the average rich peasant household has four times the asset-ıe of a poor peasant household : the asset structure is qualitatively e different in one case compared to the other.

It may also be noted that both the non-land productive asset value unit of operated area, (characteristic 1 of the previous section) as well he total working capital outlay (current costs) per unit of area, are tively associated with class status, being higher than average for the ur-hiring classes and lower than average for all others.

The acreage level grouping of the very same data, fail to indicate any ciation between farm size and the structure of assets or of working al. As regards the values per acre of assets and inputs, we observe a dly inverse relationship with farm size—which is in line with the much ıssed Farm Management Studies findings. Thus, we have the situation a given set of data show a direct relation of value of inputs per acre class status, but an inverse relation of the same variable with farm even though the average farm size is directly related to class status est for rich peasants and declining as we move down the class ladder ; ınge however being less than in the acreage grouping).

The reason for this is best discussed in the context of output perfor-e.

ency' of family-labour based farms vs hired-labour using farms.

In view of the findings summarised above, which show that both plication of modern types of fixed capital as well as the intensity of ng capital application per unit of area is higher than average on the -hiring holdings, it will not surprise the reader that output per unit a (crop products plus livestock products) is also found to be higher average on the labour-hiring holdings (Table VII) compared to the and poor peasant holdings. In short there is a *direct relation* between tatus and yield performance.

The very same data grouped by acreage levels, give us an *inverse rela-* tween farm size and yield (Table VIII), as might be expected from t that intensity of input application and farm size were found to be

inversely related, earlier. Thus, we have the result made familiar by number of Farm Management Studies around which an enormous literatu has by now developed.

While a number of authors have attempted an 'explanation' of t inverse relation between farm size and yield, most fall in the category statistical decomposition of yield variation into its components—irrigati and cropping pattern variation being the main factors. Why these shou vary the way they do, is a question which has not been tackled satisfa torily. The only analytical explanation attempted still remains that b A.K. Sen, using the Chayanovian model, to say that family-labour base holdings do not 'count their labour' i.e., cost it, at the market wage ra and hence push labour input beyond the point of equality of margin product of labour with the wage rate, thus obtaining higher yields cor pared to the hired-labour based or capitalist holdings which are constrai ed by having to pay the wage-rate. As an explanation of the observ inverse relation of farm size and yield in the FMS, evidently there must an implicit identification of small-acreage holdings with 'family labo based', and large-acreage holdings with 'hired labour based' holdings ; f the model to hold up the assumption of identical production functions f the two types of holdings, is also crucial.[6]

We have argued elsewhere that there is a logical contradiction postulating the coexistence of the two types of holdings, with identic production functions. The capitalist holdings employing hired labour mu produce a surplus-profit where family based farms need not ; and in pra tice their access to investible funds implies that they can employ qualit tively different production techniques i.e., operate on a different 'produ tion function' altogether. The Sen argument (which is identical wi Chayanov's argument) on superior peasant efficiency cannot star theoretical scrutiny ; we would expect the labour-hiring farms as a grou to show higher, not lower yields compared to family labour farms as group, though of course it is quite possible for an individual famil holding to have higher yield than an individual hired labour based hol ing.[7]

Our use of a direct index of labour-use to separate out the labou hiring farms from the rest, enables us to refute decisively the Chayanov-Se position. The labour hiring holdings are found to have higher, not lowe output per unit of area. (The actual productivity differential is larger tha our data indicate, since the sample was restricted by a low ceiling on hold ing size). A positive association of yield with class status is seen to b perfectly consistent with a negative association of yield with farm acreage This is simply because Table I holds—not just in Haryana but everywhere viz. the set of small-acreage holdings intersects but is not identical with th set of small peasants and poor peasants, while the set of large-acreag holdings similarly intersects but is not identical with the set of middl

isants and **rich peasants.**[8]

For any ***given acreage group,*** the observed yield per acre is in fact a ghted average ***of the yield in the first*** sub-set (family labour holdings) the yield in ***the second sub-set (hired*** labour holdings), the weights ig the respective **areas.** **If within the** family labour based holdings ne there is an **inverse relation** between farm size and yield (and there theoretical **reasons** for expecting such a relationship) then this inverse ation would show up in a moderated form in the weighted averages by eage, even if the hired labour holdings are quite free from such a rela- nship, as long as the yield differential between the two types of holdings not very large. If over time however (assuming the weights, i.e., relative eas are unchanged) the hired labour based holdings, representing the ipitalist tendency, raise their yields at a faster rate through investment, ien given the higher proportion of hired labour farms' area in the larger creage groups, the overall relation of farm size and yield would now how up as a direct one (as is already happening in some parts of Punjab).

Semi-feudalism and enforced commercialisation

In the sample we are considering, there were a number of family- labour based holdings which paid about half of gross output as rent on land leased in, such land constituting the major part or the entire operated area. On the basis of our criterion such holdings would fall straight away into the 'poor peasant' category (since the labour-days embodied in rent and parted with, would constitute at least half of the labour days worked on the operated holding).

Looking at Table IX on the disposal of crop output under various heads, we find that a rather clear classwise picture emerges. The highest degree of market-orientation is registered by the rich peasant holdings, for whom the combined category of 'sold' and 'stored for future sale' accounts for 57.2 per cent of total output value. With declining class status, parti- cipation on the commodity market also declines steadily, with the poor peasants at the bottom marketing only 17 per cent of output. The propor- tion of output the poor peasants *hand over to others,* however is much higher, for 26 per cent of output goes as kind rent payments alone. (This figure is the average over all poor peasants, not only those actually paying rent but also those who fall in the poor peasant category because they hire out family labour alone without rent payment). The small peasants, too have to pay 10 per cent on average as kind rents. This indicates that if the poor peasants and small peasants actually owned the land they now rent, then they would be in a position to market perhaps 43 per cent and 46 per cent respectively of their output instead of the mere 17 per cent and 36 per cent that they do market (assuming that the amount of crop now being paid as kind rent is entirely marketed).

In what way is this crop disposal pattern related to the question of

'semi feudalism'? In the Marxist literature, 'feudal' relations consist conceptually in the direct extraction of surplus from an enserfed peasantry by a superior proprietory class, without the mediation of markets, where the basis for such direct extraction is landed property. The qualified concept 'semi-feudal' was used in the context of colonial and partly colonial economies where overt serfdom did not exist but was replaced by land-hunger of peasants, who were still obliged to pay out surplus to those monopolising landed property. Direct extraction of surplus in the form of labour or produce, without the intermediation of the market and with monopoly of landed property remains the essential feature of 'semi-feudal' relations. Our data on crop disposal for Haryana indicate that such direct extraction of surplus produce in kind remains quite important for a segment of the tenants, and depresses the market participation of the poor peasants as a whole, considerably.

The discussion above is necessary to distinguish the conventional or classical Marxist concept of 'semi-feudalism', which we adopt, from the interpretation given to the term in, for example, the Bhaduri model of 'semi-feudal' relations which has been widely quoted in the literature. The cash indebtedness of a tenant to a landlord on account of consumption loans is the central feature, entailing increasing commoditisation of the tenant's product. This is a different situation from that revealed by our data, which indicate a very low level of commoditisation of the poor peasants' product owing to the direct extraction of kind rent, and thus conforms to the classical notion of 'semi-feudal' relations.

It may be noted that while the poor peasants and small peasants retain 53 per cent and 48.8 per cent of crop output for on-farm consumption, their level of (kind) consumption, is only one-half and four-fifth respectively of the kind consumption of the rich peasants, although the latter retain only one third of crop output for this purpose.

The burden of payment of all rent (kind plus cash), loan interest and commercial charges taken together, is relatively higher for the rural poor, as will be clear from the discussion of disposable incomes below.

Economic viability and surplus retention

We would expect the labour hiring holdings to retain surplus above the family's consumption needs out of the net output, while the poor peasants and small peasants may be expected to be hard put to satisfy subsistence requirements. To see if this is the case, a comparson is undertaken between the income and (a) imputed value of family labour on the one hand, (b) poverty levels on the other. The exercise of evaluating family labour days at the wagerate and comparing with the net income actually obtained, is equivalent to asking the question, whether family workers obtained a return to their labour at least as high as the wage rate.

Two concepts of income are adopted : (a) the farm labour income, given by the gross output value (of crops and live stock) less all material

costs actually paid out in cash or kind. This is identical with value added in production less wage outlays, (b) the farm disposable income, which is the farm labour income less payments of rent, loan interest, trader's commission, land revenue and cess.

The distinction between the two concepts of income derives from the treatment of rent, interest etc. as constituting charges which are in the nature of property-claims on the producer's surplus, rather than 'cost of production'. It will be clear from Table X, that the farm labour income per household for poor peasants, for example, is less than two fifths of the level enjoyed by rich peasants. But the relative position of the poor peasant worsens dramatically when disposable income is considered. More than half of their labour income is taken away from them by way of payments of rent etc. (rent constituting 98 per cent of the total exactions and three-fifth being in kind) compared to below 6 per cent in the case of rich peasants. The disposable income of poor peasants drops in consequence to just over one-fifth of the rich peasants' income.

We evaluate the standardised family labour days of the cultivating households at the daily wage-rate of casual labourers in the sample, which was Rs. 5.00. On deducting this imputed value from the labour income and disposable income respectively, deficits are observed in the case of the poor peasants and petty employers; the small peasants register a deficit when disposable income is considered but show a surplus with labour income. Only the labour-hiring classes register unambiguous surpluses. This finding is the same as stating that the rural poor (small and poor peasants) fail to get a return to the labour put in by family workers, which is at least as high as the casual labour wage-rate; while the rural well-to-do obtain higher-than-wage return.

The same data grouped by acreage levels shows no theoretically predictable pattern : all groups including farms over 10 acres register deficits, except the 5.0-10.0 acre group which shows a surplus.

The comparison of the income from agriculture, and non-cultivation incomes in Table XII predictably indicates that poor peasants try to make up through wage-paid work for their low cultivation incomes, as do the small peasants to a lesser extent (the balance is contributed mainly by remittances). Even if we consider the total disposable income from all sources however, and compare it to poverty-level incomes, we find that the rural poor continue to register deficits. (Table XII). The unfavourable divergence is largest for the poor peasants, followed by landless labourers, and then by small peasants Only the labour-hiring classes register positive deviations from poverty level incomes Thus only 35 per cent of the cultivating households in the sample are economically viable, and these are the labour-hiring households : all other households making up 65 per cent of the total fail to reach the poverty-line income, whether in the sense defined by the Planning Commission, or in that defined by Dandekar-Rath.

While the data relate to a cross-sectional sample at a point of time, he implications of this pattern of surplus retention for changes over time ire quite clear. We can hardly expect the rural poor, (identical with the et of family labour based farms and those hiring out) to be able to undertake investment in expanding production further through adopting new echnology when they fail to reach poverty-level incomes. Conversely the abour-hiring and rent-appropriating classes, by virtue of their exploitative)osition and surplus appropriation, are in a strong position to invest and :xpand their scale of production if it is profitable for them to do so.

APPENDIX A

The following limits are specified to the value of E in order to classify households into a set of mutually exclusive and all-exhaustive categories (sub-categories not specified here are not ruled out)

Class	Defining Characteristic	Value of $E=X/F$		Reason
1. Landlord	No manual labour in self-employment, large employment of others' labour	$E \to \alpha$,	$F=0$, $X>0$, and large	Primarily exploiting labour of others's
2. Rich peasant	At least as large an employment of others' labour as self-employment	$E>1$	$F>0$, $X>0$, $X>F$	
3. Middle peasant	Smaller employment of others' labour than self-employment	$1>E>0$	$F>0$, $X\geqslant 0$, $X<F$	Primarily selfemployed
....	....			
4. Small peasant	Zero employment of others or working for others; and working for others to smaller extent than self-employmet	$0>E>-1$	$F>N$, $X\leqslant 0$, $\mid X \mid <F$	
5. Poor peasant (Poor tenant and labourer with land)	Working for others to a greater extent than self-employment	$E\leqslant -1$	$F>0$, $X<0$, $\mid X \mid \geqslant F$	Primarily exploited by others
6. Landless Labourers	No self-Employment; Working entirely For others	$E \to -\alpha$	$F=0$, $X<0$ and large	

Table IV

Area under Irrigation, HYV and Remunerative Crops

	Percent of Cropped Area Under		
	Irrigation	HYV	Remun. Crops
Rich	65.7	31.9	56.2
Middle	63.5	31.8	54.2
Small	54.7	13.2	39.8
Poor	55.9	19.2	20.3
	59.6	17.5	45.3
Acreage			
0-2.5	51.8	18.4	37.0
2.5-5.0	55.4	15.1	39.3
5.0-10.0	64.3	19.0	49.2
10.0-15.0	53.5	15.2	43.4
	59.6	17.5	45.8

Table V

Structure of Productive Assets (per cent)

Peasant Class	Tubewell, other Irrigation, and Machinery	Livestock	Implements, buildings & vehicles	Agro-industry and non-farm	Total
Rich	49.7	39.4	7.8	2.9	100.0
Middle	25.1	56.5	18.4	0.1	100.0
Small	20.2	67.6	11.2	0.9	100.0
Poor	0.0	90.9	9.1	0.0	100.0
All	24.3	61.6	13.3	0.76	100.0
Acreage					
0-2.5	13.9	74.0	10.6	1.5	100.0
2.5-5.0	19.7	67.8	11.9	0.6	100.0
5.0-10.0	32.3	53.8	13.0	0.9	100.0
10.0-15.0	11.6	68.9	19.0	0.0	100.0

Table VI

Structure of Current Input Costs (per cent)

Peasant Class	Wages	Fuels, Machinery & Irrigation & Hire Charges	Sub-Total 1 + 2	Seed, manures, fertilizer	Sub-Total 3 + 3	Livestock Maintenance	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Rich	29.9	15.5	45.4	23.8	69.2	30.8	100.0
Middle	10.3	12.5	22.8	22.8	45.6	54.4	100.0
Small	0.2	6.7	6.9	19.4	26.3	73.7	100.0
Poor	0.4	6.3	6.7	25.5	32.2	67.8	100.0
Petty Employer	18.7	8.0	26.7	9.9	36.6	63.4	100.0
	8.2	10.1	18.3	21.5	39.7	60.3	100.0
Acreage							
0.0-2.5	2.6	10.2	12.8	17.6	30.4	69.6	100.0
2.5-5.0	4.2	12.0	16.2	17.6	33.8	66.2	100.0
5.0-10.0	10.2	9.8	20.0	20.5	40.5	59.5	100.0
10.0-15.0	12.3	8.0	20.3	34.1	54.4	45.5	100.0
	8.2	10.1	18.3	21.5	39.7	60.2	100.0

Table VII

Output per Holding, per Acre and per Worker by Class

Peasant Class	Output per Holding	Output per Acre	Output per family worker	Total Input Cost per Acre
Rich	5533.3	746.1	2597.8	484.6
Middle	4233.9	671.7	1693.5	369.5
Small	2745.3	594.9	1032.1	301.3
Poor	1764.5	431.6	619.1	233.9
Petty employer	1230.6	671.3	580.5	490.5
	3228.1	634.6	1246.4	343.7

Table VIII

Output per Holding and per Acre by Acreage level

Acreage group	Output per Holding	Total Input Cost per Acre	Output per Acre
0.0-2.5	1494.8	657.4	928.1
2.5-5.0	2189.6	407.9	656.6
5.0-10.0	4411.4	299.6	635·7
10.0-15.0	5675.9	298.0	497.0
All	3228.1	343.7	634.6

Table IX

Disposal of Crop Output (per cent)

1 Peasant Class	2 Wages and Artisan payment	3 Consump- tion and seed	4 Rent	5 Sold	6 Total
Rich	6.41	33.49	2.91	57.18	100.0
Middle	4.56	48.80	2.03	44.43	100.0
Small	1.84	51.59	10.11	36.04	100.0
Poor	1.37	55.50	26.10	17.00	100.0
Petty Employ	8.72	71.89	2.73	16.66	100.0

Note : 'Sold' in column 5 includes 'stored for future sale'. Columns 2 to 5 do not add up to 100, the difference being 'spoiled and wasted output'.

Table X

Farm Labour Income and Disposable Income per Holding (Rs.)

1	2	3	4	5
easant Class	Farm Labour Income	Rent, Interest, etc.	Farm Disposable Income	Percent of (3) to (2)
ich	1968.7	109.3	1859.4	5.6
iddle	1928.8	172.6	1756.3	9.0
nall	1365.8	182.6	1183.1	13.4
oor	813.8	420.6	393.1	51.7
tty employer	342.5	33.7	308.8	9.8
l	1492.8	193.1	1299.8	12.9
reage group				
)-2.5	446.6	30.2	416 1	6.8
i-5.0	844.6	100·6	743.9	11.9
)-10.0	2352.9	314.2	2036.8	13.4
.0-15.0	2305.2	340.2	1964.9	14.8
l	1492.8	193.1	1299.8	12.9

Table XI

Surplus/Deficit per Holding (Rs.)

ısant Class	Farm Labour Surplus	Farm Disposable Surplus
Rich	1051.8	942.5
Middle	554 6	382.0
Small	170.7	—12 0
Poor	—331.5	—752.1
Petty employer	—167.3	—201.0
All	283.9	90.8
Acreage group		
0.0-2.5	—94.8	—125.2
2.5-5.0	—245.8	—346.4
5.0-10.0	920.0	603.8
10.0-15.0	119.5	—221.3
All	283.9	90.8

: Farm Labour Surplus is the Farm Labour Income less imputed value of family labour at Rs 5.00 per day. Farm Disposable Surplus is the Farm Disposable Income less the same imputed value.

Table XII

Total Incomes Relative to Poverty Levels

1 Peasant Class	2 Noncultivation Incomes	3 Percentage of (2) from wage work	4 Total Disposable Income	5 Deviation of Total Disposable Income from Poverty-line (a)	 (b)
Rich	115.3	0.0	1974.7	318.8	732.8
Middle	116.9	0.4	1873.2	21.1	484.1
Small	157.1	3.7	1340.3	—786.6	—254.9
Poor	345.5	37.6	738.6	—1152.8	—680.0
Landless labourer	1031.15	96.4	1227.8	—278.9	97.8
Petty employer	200.0	0 0	508.8	—406.8	—177.9

Note : In column 5, (a) is the deviation from the Planning Commission poverty line and (b) the deviation from the Dandekar-Rath line.

1. U. Patnaik, 'Economics of farm size and farm scale some assumptions re-examined', *EPW*, Vol. VII, Nos. 31-33, Special No Aug. 1972.
2. U. Patnaik, 'Class differentiation within the peasantry : an approach to the analysis of Indian agriculture', *EPW*, Vol. XI, No. 39, Sept. 25, 1976 (In his recent *Political Economy of Underdevelopment*, Amiya K. Bagchi has referred to my discussion in that article, of the criteria employed by V.I. Lenin in the context of China, as the 'Lenin-Mao' classification, much in the same spirit that N.K. Chandra had, much earlier, referred to the 'Kautsky-Lenin law of concentration'. We would be happier with a somewhat different formulation ' what is being talked about, is the Marxist approach to identifying rural classes, or the Marxist law of capitalist concentration. While Lenin, Kautsky or Mao were certainly prominent Marxists, the acceptance of the basic principles involved extend to many thousands of other people ; it would be equally invidious to talk of 'the Samuelson law of diminishing marginal utility' !).
3. This sample was drawn under an ICSSR-financed project directed by Dr. Sheila Bhalla on small farmers and labourers in Haryana. I am very greatful to Dr. Bhalla for giving me permission to analyse the data and to publish the results.
4. For a discussion of discriminant functions and Mahalanobis distance, see C.R. Rao, *Linear Statistical Inference and Its Applications* (New Delhi, 1965), pp. 565-567.
5. E. Araquem da Silva, 'Measuring the incidence of peasant capitalism : an analysis of survey data from north-east Brazil', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol 12, No. 1, October 1984.

6. A.K. Sen, 'Peasants and Dualism with or without surplus labour' *Journal of Political Economy*, 1966.
7. U. Patnaik, 'Neo-Populism and Marxism : the Chayanovian view of the agrarian problem and its fundamental fallacy', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 4, July 1979.
8. The same result was obtained in an unpublished paper by S. Brahme and R.S. Rao, who analysed the FMS data for Maharashtra. See their 'Capitalism in Agriculture—A Survey' (paper presented to Seminar on Political Economy of Agriculture, Calcutta, 1973).

Book Reveiw

Political Economy and Development Economics

PRANAB K. BARDHAN, *The Political Economy of Development in India*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 1984; *Land, Labour and Rural Poverty: Essays in Development Economics*, Columbia University Press, New York and Oxford University Press, New Delhi 1984.

THESE two recent books by Pranab Bardhan differ so much in style and content that lumping them together for the purpose of review might seem a little odd at first glance : the first is wide-ranging and speculative, the second analytical and empirical. *The Political Economy of Development in India* (PED) is based on Bardhan's Radhakrishnan Lectures delivered at Oxford in the summer of 1983 and paints in a few broad brushstrokes the central structural problems that the author sees the Indian economy facing. *Land, Labor and Rural Poverty* (LLP) on the other had brings together as a collection of essays much of Bardhan's earlier work,now in a revised and expanded form, on various micro topics in development economics like peasant labour supply, land leasing and the workings of factor markets. Both books have much to offer, as one would expect from a writer of Bardhan's class. But I want to suggest that, read together, the very contrast between them helps to illuminate a number of issues, not only of methodology, but of India's changing political economy.

Bardhan's main concern in PED is with "the political economy of the constraints that seem to have blocked the economy's escape from a low level equilibrium trap of slow growth" (p. viii). This for him is "more of an analytical puzzle than the question of why the poor in India do not get a better deal" (*loc. cit.*) and the focus therefore is on the political processes governing accumulation : questions of distribution are in fact only touched on in the Introduction, which sets the stage for the subsequent discussion by rapidly going over the salient features of India's development record, and in particular, noting the very limited impact on poverty that has been made. A quick chapter on the agricultural constraints to growth—where the need for a continuing high level of investment and the maintenance of

frastructure in this vital sector are emphasised—leads Bardhan on to
ell-trodden, if still dangerous territory : the causes of industrial decelera-
on in the Indian economy since the mid-sixties As is well known, this still
conclusive debate has engaged some of the best minds working on the
dian economy, and a number of competing views have crystallised.[1]
ius while neoclassical economists have by and large blamed the inefficie-
ies associated with the regime of controls for the secular decline in the
te of industrial growth, others have variously focused on the failure of
riculture to grow at a sufficient pace, on the impact of adverse terms of
ide for industry, on the decline of public investment, on the deteriorating
oductivity of capital and on the worsening pattern of income distribution
to mention only the major hypotheses that one finds in the literature.[2]

Bardhan is clearly aware of the range in this debate. He does note
: limitations of some explanations of the deceleration (e.g those that
voke a worsening in levels of inequality, or attempt to find a link with
: end of the era of import substitution) and statistical back-up for his
guments is provided in the score of tables gathered together at the end
the book. But in trying to establish that the culprit ultimately is the
nbination of decline in investment levels and the increasing inefficiency
capital use, he really cannot hope to convince anyone who has not
eady been convinced through an independent reading of the evidence.
rhaps because of the inherent limitations imposed by a lecture format,
: text makes important claims without adequate substantiation, and these
en emerge incompletely in footnotes (e.g. the results of econometric
rcises which show the stimulating effect—and little 'crowding out'--of
olic sector investment on private sector economic activity, or the evide-
· that the increase in capital-output ratios can be clearly linked to cost
alation and 'irresponsible political decision-making')—and one gets the
oression that Bardhan is rather eager to establish his case and pass on,
he puts it, "from the world of economic statistics to that of political
iology" for this explanation does as it happens fit in rather nicely with
ieory of state power in India that is exposited in the next couple of
pters.

This theory—possibly the most innovative, if controversial, part of
book—takes as its starting point the work of the political sociologist
eda Skocpol [1979, 1982] and in particular her well-known analyses of
mechanisms and apparatus of state power and control. Bardhan argues
t the Indian state has to be seen as a 'relatively autonomous' regulatory
d hence patronage dispensing) agent than as a more familiar develop-
it one. He then identifies three dominant 'proprietary classes' who have
iaged in the Indian context to appropriate the institutions of state
ver and in whose interests the mechanisms of te therefore largely
rate. Each of these classes has a measure of clout to dir ct part of the
rations of state to its own advantage, but differences amongst the

protagonists involved preclude collusive action to maximize gains from collective control of the state. Indeed what we are faced with is a rather disparate coalition where conflicts of interest (over access to educational privileges, licensing grants, financial subsidies) increasingly come out into the open—witness Sharad Joshi's rich farmer movement supporting 'Bharat' versus 'India'. Thus the dominant class, far from being a homogeneous entity (as in some advanced capitalist countries) is here seen as riven by intra-class conflicts. What this leads to ultimately is a struggle amongst these various factions to gain control of key social resources whereby one faction can advance its interests over the others. This jockeying involves the manipulation of the whole paraphernalia of the state power, from changing the tax structure, to cornering industrial permits and directing the flow of public financial transactions.

It is at this stage that the argument is closed, for Bardhan notes that despite an impressive record of resource mobilization (through indirect taxation and the transfer of savings from the household sector) the bulk of these resources has been frittered away in current expenditures, leaving insufficient surplus to finance the ambitious plan targets in infrastructural investment programmes, such as transport, coal power and irrigation. Why ? Largely because "when diverse elements of the loose and uneasy coalition of the dominant proprietary classes pull in different direction, and when none of them is individually strong enough to dominate the process of resource allocation, one predictable outcome is the proliferation of subsidies and grants to placate all of them, with the consequent reduction in available surplus for public capital formation" (p. 61)

In sum the Indian economy has become an elaborate network of patronage and subsidies in which the hetrogeneous proprietary classes described above fight and bargain for their share in the spoils of the system. Under these circumstances, the needed level of public investment simply cannot be sustained, since so many resources have to be wasted on the spoils economy. It is precisely this "pervading atmosphere of the politics of patronage" that also gets reflected in the high capital-output ratio and low capacity utilization of the public sector, noted above as a characteristic feature of Indian industrial performance since the mid-sixties. Such "compulsions of clientelist pork barrel politics arising from the nature of the polity and its interrelationships with the structures of civil society" (p. 71) contribute to explaining then not only the nature of the economic slowdown that we have witnessed over the last twenty years but also have, as Bardhan notes in a concluing chapter, implications for the future of the Indian polity : whereas the nature of class balance and hetrogeneity may accommodate a more democratic style of politics than in other developing societies, economic stagnation has a tendency to generate in time a political legitimation crisis. As the hitherto subordinate classes become more assertive in their demands for slices of the cake, as

he hold of the proprietary classes on the apparatus of power weakens, ew alliances emerge and new forms of conflict resolution, some much ss palatable than others, become necessary No one should place too any bets on the ability of our democratic political system to manage onflicts, especially against the background of the current social ferment. is on this equivocal note then that Pranab Bardhan ends his lectures.

That the whole terrain of political economy should be straddled so ffortlessly in a mere hundred pages is clearly something of a feat. But as noted earlier it is this appealing brevity which despite the accompanying it may be the source of problems And it may be the case that a ieoretical formalization of the development process of a country as omplex as India should have been the product of more elaborate social nd historical analysis. While space precludes a fuller discussion, here are few points worth pondering over

To begin with, it is apparent that the governance of most multi-ayered societies has entailed class coalitions of one kind or another, and rguably the Indian polity has always been characterized by some sort of rangement between the agrarian and industrial classes, never entirely ee from conflict, and with third and fourth elements (viz. bureaucrats or 'service bourgeoisie') having latterly to be accommodated. But why iould this necessarily lead to stagnation? The task of a theoretical planation must surely be to show that, given certain conjunctures, and ith agents acting in certain ways, no other course of events was likely or ssible than the one being advanced. But Bardhan's explanation begs rtain questions.

First, he has to show that the demands made by the proprietary isses on the system only became serious enough to undermine it after e mid-sixties, when growth started decelerating. This in fact is related the reasons why growth slowed down. Did this tripartite class arrange-ent gain in strength in the mid-sixties and thereby causally influence the owdown? If so, what in the nature of Indian society caused it to become iportant only then and not before?

Second, we have to be clear about the actual reasons for the celeration, independent of any value they might have for socio-political planation. Note that Bardhan's thesis turns on the mix of public vestment decline and capital inefficiency, which he opts for. What if it re established that the failure of agricultural growth to pick up ostantially since the mid-sixties acted as a constraint independent of all iers, or that stagnation was the result of demand deficiency which could ve been avoided by a combination of an expansionary macro policy and tain distributional changes? How would one fit the proprietary class pothesis into this version of events?

Third, the hypothesis is only really interesting if it can be shown it stagnation was an inevitable outcome, once these arrangements were

set in motion. But is there a necessary link ? After all other societies (e.g. South Korea) have had complex class arrangements and yet had sustained high levels of growth. What prevented the proprietary elements in India from having their share of the spoils and a certain rate of growth being maintained, taking into account the size of the economy and its capacity to take on free-riders ?

And lastly a point which perhaps underlies the others : what after all is the analytical basis on which these three classes are held to be the main proprietary ones ? Was their formation contingent on the socio-economic developments of a particular period, or is there some more fundamental source of 'structuration', either arising from changes in the mode of production, or from modifications in the nature of power relations in society or in the nature of the state giving rise to new types of group formation ? If the former is the case, then the whole exercise should be treated as just trying to explain or rationalize what happened in a limited period of India's post-Independence history and will soon be superceded by events. If it is the latter, we then need more of a conceptual apparatus than has been provided to understand how a disparate coalition of bourgeois, kulak and white collar interests succeeded in wresting control of the Indian state and in the process ruined the best laid plans for economic progress.

But these after all are large 'state-theoretic issues' as Bardhan calls them, and the reader may by now be wondering whether the fractious doings of an unseemly menage-a-trois has all that much to do with the real issues that confront the Indian economy anyway. Isn't the real question, as Amartya Sen, the chief discussant at the MIT Conference referred to earlier, argued, why growth hasn't affected the 'positive freedoms' of the poor, rather than as to why growth (best seen as a means to an end rather than an end in itself) slowed down ?

There can be few better starting points towards answering this question (or range of questions) than to turn to the second of the two books under review. Recall that in PED the analytical puzzle the author set himself to resolve was that of an economy with favourable preconditions caught in a low-level equilibrium trap : issues relating to distribution were therefore left out. In LLP this approach is indirectly defended, for we are told that, "policy discussion without a well-developed theory of the state is largely vacuous" (p. xiii). Despite this caveat, however, not only does the ensuing discussion give us a firm methodological handle to apply to many current policy issues in rural credit, insurance, irrigation, etc., but in its combination of theoretical rigour and command of institutional detail, it succeeds in providing a wealth of insight into the variety of factors that could come in between even well-intentioned poverty-alleviation programmes and the benefits that actually reach the deprived. These and other virtues combine to make this collection of essays one of the most

exciting contributions to development economics to have appeared for some time.

LLP is divided into three parts. Part A is entitled Agricultural Labor and brings together the author's research on topics such as labour supply, unemployment and wage determination (including two well known journal articles previously published in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* and *the Journal of Political Economy*). Part B consists of essays dealing with tenancy, land lease and contracting; it brings into focus notably the results of an extensive village survey in West Bengal on which Bardhan has been collaborating with Ashok Rudra. Finally, Part C, the most heterogeneous, perhaps the most challenging, third of the book comprises essays on different aspects of rural production relations, class formation, complexities in the relation between growth and poverty, and poverty and mortality.

LLP, unlike PED, is not an easy book to read. Besides keeping in mind what tongue-twisters like HMUNOWN actually mean (nothing really more frightening than 'a dummy for unowned homestead') the diligent reader will, in due course, have to ponder over the complexities of estimating LOGIT and PROBIT relationships, brush up on his or her control theory, stomach an awful looking differential equation which describes a worker's equilibrium under labour-tying, delve into the principal-agent theorems of Radner et. al. to understand the dynamics of tenurial insecurity and, finally, effect a rapid change in gear to appreciate the artificiality of the Parsonian distinction between personalism and universalism as well as the limitations of functionalist sociology in general in analyzing financial markets and credit-tying. But while happily discouraging the lazy afternoon browser from entering this terrain, I would be sorry if all this puts anyone else off, for Bardhan's clarity and readability more than make up for the difficulty of some of the material. And of course, the book is brimful of important and interesting insights. There will be no time to go into more than a few of them, so I will have to pick and choose.

In the first part on agricultural labour, the statistical analysis throws up the result that, "the wage response to market labour supply seems to be insignificant for both men and women in agricultural labour households ...... Market agricultural supply seems to be principally determined by other economic, social and demographic constraints, not by the wage rate" (p. 28). Note here the contrast with the Bliss and Stern (1982) work on Palanpur : "we should conclude . . . that the familiar supply and demand competitive model is not obviously inadequate as a description of the labour market in Palanpur. The wage rate is not rigid. There are large numbers of net buyers and sellers inside Palanpur, and there are opportunities for buying and selling labour outside the village too" (p. 300). The two statements need not of course necessarily be in conflict, since competitive buying and selling in an individual village context can coexist with a non-competitive labour market at an aggregate level. But my

feeling is that Bardhan's result is the more intuitively plausible one, given what we know in particular about the 'extra-economic' pressure on many agricultural labourers to seek work. Yet it is fair to say that economic analysis has on the whole concentrated on the competitive model, no doubt influenced by marginal productivity theories of wage determination which are prone to regard wage flexibility as performing an equilibrating function in the labour market. Indeed as Bardhan later remarks, "this theory . . . is particularly incapable of explaining the persistence of unemployment among extremely poor farm labourers, whose appetite for voluntary unemployment (or leisure preference) is not likely to be great" (pp 59-60).

It is in this context rather heartening to see someone so willing to back up theoretical intuition with detailed empirical testing : this dual approach recurs in fact throughout the subsequent essays and is used to explain a variety of topics. In general, this orientation to problems manages to produce illuminating results, although it is (as all interesting empirical work is) beset with problems. Bardhan is well aware of these and in fact touches on them in the Introduction : thus he has on occasion to make inferences from incomplete data, sometimes relying on proxy variables to fill gaps, at other times the data only permit linear modelling even though the underlying conception is clearly non-linear. In general the ingenuity at work in facing up to these difficulties has to be admired. At times however I grew uneasy at the weight of analysis placed on an admittedly shaky data base. I refer here to the chapters on tenancy where, despite his initial injunction that "tenancy as an institution has complex historical, sociological, political and legal dimensions and variations in a statistical magnitude like the area under tenancy cannot capture the qualitative nuances associated with them" (p.127). Bardhan takes us through an elaborate econometric analysis designed to explain, inter alia, regional variations in the extent of tenancy; the concluding discussion seems to me to soft-pedal on both the limitations of this kind of statistical analysis while dealing with an institution known to be complex in its occurrence and persistence, and on the specific pitfalls of the kind of cross-section estimation procedure used when the data base is of uneven reliability.

Part C contains an important essay (ch. 14) which to my knowledge has not been previously published in any form. This orients itself to the ongoing debate as to whether agricultural growth has had any 'trickle-down' effects, or whether it has been more 'immiserizing' in nature. (Bardhan is more than entitled to have his say on the matter, having engaged in a famous debate with B.S. Minhas many years ago on the parallel question of whether poverty in India increased over the sixties). The chapter proceeds with characteristic thoroughness : we are first told about mechanisms at work which could worsen the lot of the poor; there then follows a warning about the absence of time-series data on poverty of

agricultural labourers, in the absence of which any firm judgements either way are foolhardy. However, Bardhan is still able to demonstrate how other pieces of data, such as the Rural Labour Enquiry Reports and the results of the 32nd data on Employment and Unemployment can be exploited to throw light on the issues at hand. In doing so, however, he correctly points to the necessity of more micro-level studies to supplement the aggregate data available. His own work using household data at the state level from West Bengal in 1977-78 suggests the highly plausible, if disturbing, result that "other things remaining the same, the probability of an agricultural labour household sliding below the poverty line seems to be higher if the household is located in a district where agricultural production has grown at a faster rate." (p 195). This result, though suggestive, is not pushed too far, given its own excessive level of aggregation.

The questions it raises about the nature of the growth processes involved are worth pursing however, and going back a little I feel that Bardhan's judgement early on in PED that the real analytical puzzle was not why the poor did not get a better deal (rather it was the blocked growth process) looks increasingly hasty in retrospect. For as Chapter 15 -a revised version of an oft-quoted EPW paper (On life and death questions)—bears out, there is quite a lot that is puzzling about the observed variations in the life chances of the poor in different regions of the countries. Thus Kerala, which on calorie intake figures (albeit taken with the usual pinch of salt) shows the highest level of poverty in India, has extraordinarily good figures on child mortality and life expectancy. Correspondingly Rajasthan and Gujarat, with lower than average poverty ratio , have appallingly bad records on child mortality. What can explain this apparent paradox and related ones ? This essay provides a beginning, but the final answer looks likely to be very complex, far more so in fact than any cynic who would reduce it simply to a political have-have-nots question could ever imagine.

In sum, as I have tried to show, there is enough in this book to keep anyone seriously interested in development economics (defined in this context !) include almost anything interesting happening in this field of development to busily engaged for quite some time. I suggested at the beginning that it should be read along with PED if only to highlight the fact that the problems LLP deals with are no less important, interesting or challenging than those which PED tackles, and which for some reason have attracted far more attention in the Indian context. I suspect this may be because economists feel that they can make a useful contribution only once a problem which has theoretical interest as well as socio-political consequence is defined in a clear-cut fashion. I conclude en by suggesting that an important product of Bardhan's work may be to demonstrate to us that the real challenge and call on our skills is to start defining afresh what

ctually should be the object of our concerns.

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1. That this continues to be an issue generating heated debate can be seen, firstly, in the wide range of positions taken at the MIT Conference discussing the Political Economy of Slow Industrial Growth in India' where a first draft of Bardhan's book was discussed (cf Varshney, 1984) and perhaps more significantly, in the reaction at home to some of the participants' views ; see in this context the note by Raj (1984) pouring cold water on many of the ideas discussed at the meeting, and Bardhan's (1984) rejoinder.
2. For reviews see for instance Nayyar (1978), Ahluwalia (1984) and Patnaik (1984).

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